

Mourning

It is not uncommon to fear death. For this reason, many people avoid cemeteries. But perhaps what we dislike more than death itself is the mourning that is so often its burdensome companion. Events associated with grief, we simply wanted to avoid. In doing so, we avoid that very something that the Beatitudes tell us we ought to deal with and, even more, we ought to practice. As we read, "Blessed are those that mourn for they shall be comforted (Matt 5:4)," we have to ask ourselves whether such a concept "is beyond and above everything ever taught by man," as President Joseph F. Smith said. Such a statement confirmed to President Smith his "belief that Jesus was not merely a man but that he was a God manifest in the flesh."¹ Otherwise, how could Jesus make such a statement that it is a blessing to mourn? This portion of the Beatitudes involved a lifestyle radically different from the world's.

In scriptural terminology, being blessed usually means being happy, but in the context of Matthew 5 instead the term *blessed* most likely indicates an enviable state. "Jesus is contrasting the world's idea of happiness with true blessedness . . . which comes from a right relationship with God." ² Calling people blessed who are mourning appears quite the opposite of a blessing. How could a person who is mourning be blessed? As Simon Tugwell tells us "Blessed are those that mourn is, paradoxically, a more necessary message than 'Rejoice in the Lord always,' because there can be no true rejoicing until we have stopped running away from mourning."³ Mourning is part of the human experience, though it is a quality that is uncomfortable and no

¹ Joseph F. Smith, Deseret News: Semi-Weekly, 17 Nov. 1861, 1.

² <https://www.gotquestions.org/blessed-are-those-who-mourn.html> Got Questions, What does blessed are those who mourn mean?

³ Simon Tugwell, *The Beatitudes: Sounds in Christian Tradition*, 1980.

one is motivated to experience. Instead, we want to be cheerful, pleasant, and comfortable as we shrink from suffering and sadness. It is paradoxical that Christ can call those who mourn blessed. It is as if he is saying, as English Anglican Priest John Stott states “happy are the unhappy.”⁴ This Beatitude is contrary to logic. For almost everyone, it is instead deemed blessed if we are prosperous and happy. But here Christ pronounces instead that to be sorrowful is blessed. However, Jesus is not saying blessed are grim, cheerless Latter-day Saints. Nor does he say blessed are those who are mourning over the difficulties of life. The subject of mourning is sad and unpleasant, without the blessedness of before and the comfort which comes after.⁵

Sorrow is a common experience, but true Christians mourn in a different way. Their sorrow is sincere and with faith—they are comforted through the great comforter, the Holy Ghost. That comfort includes a knowledge of Jesus Christ and His Atonement, which sanctifies our sorrow. So not every kind of mourning can be blessed, and the blessedness of that comfort which our Redeemer assures us is attached to the mourning. It is present and positive.⁶ When someone goes through losing someone of an immediate closeness then a purifying process develops a bond between them and others who have similarly gone through the same things. This bond of love and unity creates a purifying process that the world cannot understand.⁷ This particular beatitude can be the most baffling in the quality it espouses, because as one looks at a person who is mourning, they are not blessed—they are desolate. To think that one is

⁴ John Stott, *The Beatitudes: Developing Spiritual Character*

⁵ John Stott, *The Beatitudes: Developing Spiritual Character*

⁶ <https://www.studylight.org/commentary/matthew/5-4.html> StudyLight.org verse-by-verse commentary Dr. T. Raffles

⁷ Royden G. Derrick, “The Beatitudes and Our Perfection,” *General Conference*, April, 1977

supposed to be happy in a mortuary is antithetical to everything our culture teaches: pleasure always takes precedence over pain.⁸ Mourning is against our societal responses. In our society, we spend most of our lives trying to avoid sorrow and pain. It seems as if the greatest human desire is to seek happiness, and most of us make every effort to find as many entertaining diversions as we can to distract us from the vicissitudes of life. However, no one gets through this life without mourning. Weeping and mourning are part of human existence, and it is a gift to be able to cry. Shedding tears cleanses us emotionally, and it helps us deal with grief.

It should be noted that the subject of all of the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount is plural. “The poor”, “the mourners”—all are treated in a group context, meaning that “virtually all of even the normal but distressing vicissitudes of life are so much more bearable when they are shared!”⁹

The Meaning of Mourning

Jesus selected the word He used to define mourning from among four choices. the English word *mourn* appears only ten times in the entire New Testament, and represents four different Greek words. There are four words used for sorrow, mourn, or grieve in the Greek New Testament: *lupeumai*, *throneo*, *kopto*, and *pantheo*. *Lupeumai* is a general word used for grief. *Throneo* has the idea of mere wailing or lamentation. *Kopto* is similar having the sense of an external show of grief, like the beating of the breast. *Pantheo* is the only one with the deep sense of inner grief that consumes the person. It has the idea of strong grief manifested externally. Or put another way, as Richard Trench says, . . . to grieve with a grief which so takes

⁸ David Warren, “Blessed are they that Mourn” *The Catholic Thing*, March 8, 2018

⁹ <https://pioneernt.com/2012/03/27/word-study-137-mourn-mourning/> The Pioneers’ New TESTAMENT, A New Translation of the New Testament, with thoughts on living by it.

possession of the whole being that it cannot be hid.¹⁰ Mourning is always associated loss. The Greek word *pentheo* is the strongest word for mourning in the Greek language. The Greek word Jesus used for *mourn* in Matthew 5:4, *pentheo*, is used ten times in the New Testament (Matthew 5:4;9:15; Mark 16:10; Luke 6:25; 1 Cor. 5:2; 2 Cor. 12:21; James 4:9; and Rev. 18:11, 15, 19).

that Jesus could have used for deep emotional grief, sorrow, and mourning. *Pentheo* “It is defined as the kind of grief which takes such a hold on a man that it cannot be hid. It is not only the sorrow which brings an ache to the heart; it is the sorrow which brings the unrestrainable tears to the eyes.”¹¹

Pantheo means to lament, such as the lament for the dead or for a severe, profound loss. It reflects an outward expression of sorrow as one experiences sadness or grief at depressing circumstances or conditions. True sadness at a loss, even a temporary loss, is normal, not wrong, or unfaithful, it is even to be expected.

Mourning is an emotional response to loss. In our subdued culture and society mourning is not quite as evident as it is in other cultures. We hear such sayings as “big boys don’t cry;” but, Christ is saying all cry, big boys included. In Matthew, Christ does not say that all pain will go away; instead, He is saying that in certain circumstances of mourning, comfort will be brought to bear. He is not saying that we will escape the things for which we mourn, but rather we will find God’s comfort.¹²

¹⁰ Richard Chenevix Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973), 238.

¹¹ William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p.93

¹² <https://bible.org/seriespage/10-blessed-are-those-who-mourn-matthew-54> Bob Deffinbaugh, *Blessed Are Those Who Mourn*, *Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*. August 25, 2004.

(WORD ON MANUSCRIPT p. 6) Mark P. Shea tells us how universal mourning is:

Mourning is universal and common—as are all our deepest experiences. For the things which are most universal are also the things that are the most personal. Everybody falls in love. Everybody has felt fear. Everybody has known delight. . . .

And everybody mourns. We may believe that when we mourn we are utterly alone. But the truth is that when we mourn we join ranks with all the weeping children of Adam and Eve . . .

We experience this not only mourning for the death of loved ones, but for the loss of things, places, times, abilities, hopes, dreams, and many of the other goods of this passing world. Mourning stalks us. We know that sooner or later our time will come and we hope to ward it off. So we chase death and loss away as soon as possible and we often act as though we have a sort of superstitious fear that it is “catching”. So we avoid the grieving, lest we get some of it on us via some unseemly display of their shouts or tears or begging for the past to return. But for all that, mourning comes to us anyway—because God wills that we be blessed.¹³

If we love, we cannot escape mourning, for mourning is the result of having loved, then losing (CHECK MANUSCRIPT PAGE 7). Inevitably, that will occur in the lives of everyone. Though we know the Resurrection will occur, in this world a loved one leaving is still a loss. They that mourn are universal.

Unblessed Mourning

Though mourning is universal, blessed mourning is not. “There is a sinful, inordinate, hopeless sorrow that can refuse to be comforted.”¹⁴ Pessimists may say that there are many griefs for which there is no remedy, so that life is not worth living. Christ did not mean to meet such a position or say there is no sorrow without remedy, nor did Christ just mean those that

¹³ Mark P. Shea, *Salt and Light: The Commandments, the Beatitudes, and a Joyful Life*. 2013
Blessed Are Those Who Mourn, Catholic Exchange, April 21, 2010 <https://catholicexchange.com/blessed-are-those-who-mourn-2>

¹⁴ <https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PERSONAL/k/184/Beatitudes-Mourning.htm> The Beatitudes, Part Three: Mourning, by John W. Ritenbaugh, Forerunner, “Personal,” March 1999

are sad; instead, he said those that are grieving. There are types of mourners who are **NOT** entitled to be blessed or receive comfort.

- Those who indulge the sorrow of discontent
- The inordinate sorrow for worldly losses
- Sorrow for wounded pride.
- The mourning of a melancholy disposition
- Sorrow for temporal distress
- Sorrow in adversity
- Sorrow because of disappointed hopes ¹⁵

In other words, all mourning is not always good or necessary. For instance, when David mourned over Absalom's death, it was very negative. Amnon wrongfully mourned because he could not have Tamar, his sister. Ahab mourned because he could not have Naboth's vineyard, and Samuel mourned because of Saul's loss of the kingdom. These expressions of mourning were inappropriate and show us that not all mourners will be comforted. Christ is not speaking to everyone about all kinds of sadness. In the Beatitude, Christ is definitely talking about specific people and certain kinds of mourning. ¹⁶

Two Kinds of Mourning

Blessed are they that mourn has the capability of meaning two things, either those that are afflicted with the loss of friends or possessions are blessed, or they that mourn over sins are

¹⁵ <https://www.studylight.org/commentary/matthew/5-4.html> StudyLight.org verse-by-verse commentary

¹⁶ <https://bible.org/seriespage/10-blessed-are-those-who-mourn-matthew-54> Bob Deffinbaugh, Blessed Are Those who Mourn, Studies in the Bospel of Matthew. August 25, 2004.

blessed.¹⁷ These two types of mourning, most especially the second, are what most Christian scholars agree was what the savior meant. Undoubtedly, in the Bible and the Book of Mormon we can see that our Heavenly Father does approve of the character of those who mourn properly. There is something about the mindset of a righteous individual who is sorrowful that helps them “view both self and life itself from a more stable and realistic basis.”¹⁸ One might ask, “Could Jesus be speaking of a certain kind of mourning different from the kind of mourning associated with death, catastrophes, frustration of dashed hopes, and other tragic events?”¹⁹

This second type of mourning, i.e., having a sorrow for our sins, is what our Savior is talking about in the Sermon on the Mount. “This sorrow is not the sorrow of the world that worketh “death” (2 Corinthians 7:10) for failure, suffering, and the consequences of sin, but the sorrow which flows out in tears that cleanse. It is the mourning over sin itself and the stain which it has left upon the soul. The apostle Paul spoke of this Godly sorrow for our sins that is essential to our spiritual progress (Romans 7:24-25). Mourning is the appropriate response to sin, and the most appropriate manifestation of mourning would be repentance. It is wrong to experience sin and not mourn. Blessed are we if we do mourn for sin, for our own sins, for the unbelief of our hearts, for our daily infirmities, the sins of life, because we commit them against a God of love, grace, and mercy. However sorrowful or distressed we may be over such things, we are blessed.”²⁰

¹⁷ <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/5-4.htm>

¹⁸ <https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PERSONAL/k/184/Beatitudes-Mourning.htm> The Beatitudes, Part Three: Mourning, by John W. Ritenbaugh, Forerunner, “Personal,” March 1999

¹⁹ <https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PERSONAL/k/184/Beatitudes-Mourning.htm> The Beatitudes, Part Three: Mourning, by John W. Ritenbaugh, Forerunner, “Personal,” March 1999

²⁰ <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/5-4.htm>

In an article that *Newsweek* published some years ago, it stated that American churches had stopped telling congregations they were sinners because it made them feel worse about themselves. How ironic it is that this is Jesus' very point.²¹ Some of us are modern Pharisees who do not see ourselves as sinners who have a defective view of sin. We want to talk about a gospel of love, but we do not want to talk about sin, and few ever pray that they might have victory over our sins. Instead, we, like a congenial God, who "accepts me the way I am."²²

On the other hand, true disciples of Jesus Christ constantly sense their ungodliness, and are constantly mourning over sin and are mindfully attuned to them. Our hearts are softened and do not fail us (D&C 88:91). A true Latter-day Saint is attuned to his or her ever-deepening relationship with their Heavenly Father, and they have much to mourn over because of their sins both of omission and commission. A daily sense of grief develops a disciple of Christ becomes more aware of their sins. A softened heart seeks for change and it admits wrong, which goes against most of what society dictates. As John W. Ritenbaugh explains,

We of this generation face an uphill battle because, through such media as television and movies, we have vicariously experienced the breaking of God's law in unparalleled frequency and in vividly sympathetic ways. On the screen life is cheap, property is meaningless, sexual purity is scoffed at, stealing is fine "if it's necessary," and faithfulness is nerdish and corny. Where is God in it? How much of this world's attitudes have we unwittingly absorbed into our character? Is our conscience still tender? Is mourning over sin—ours and others'—a vital part of our relationship with God?²³

²¹ Kenneth L. Woodward, "What Ever Happened to Sin?" *Newsweek* 2/5/95, www.newsweek.com/what-ever-happened-sin-185180.

²² <https://neverthirsty.org/bible-studies/life-of-christ-sermon-on-the-mount-late-a-d-31/happy-are-those-who-mourn/NeverTHirsty, Happy Are Those Who Mourn>,

²³ <https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PERSONAL/k/184/Beatitudes-Mourning.htm> The Beatitudes, Part Three: Mourning, by John W. Ritenbaugh, Forerunner, "Personal," March 1999

If we can look on sin without sorrow, then we have never truly come unto Christ. Amazingly, the God against whom we have sinned is the one who forgives sinners!²⁴ Mourning for sin is a pathway to progress and happiness, beginning with Godly sorrow in one's heart over sin. It is true that only those who really understand the reality of sin can appreciate forgiveness, and only those who repent can experience God's comfort.

Godly sorrow is accompanied by an acknowledgment of our own sins, which is the first step of repentance. If I truly sorrow over my sins, it drives repent so that my nature can change and I can overcome my fallen nature.²⁵ As Thomas Baby asks: "Are you brokenhearted over your inadequacy to be genuinely good to others? Do you see how far you are from living the life described in the Bible? Do you grieve that you are bound and are a prisoner of the sin that dwells within you? If you can answer yes, you will be comforted because your godly sorrow will produce repentance, which leads to action, to obedience and, ultimately, to salvation – to life."²⁶

The Present Tense of Mourning

It is important to note that the tense of the verb used in this Beatitude is not "have mourned" but "mourned." Mourning is a present and continuous experience. We do have much to mourn over. Blessed are those that mourn is emphatically present tense and ongoing. It is not just for those who from time to time experience mourning, but it is consistent and

²⁴ Sinclair, Ferguson, *Kingdom of Life in a Fallen World* (Carlisle, Penn: The Banner of Truth Trust 1987), pg #

²⁵ <http://activechristianity.org/blessed-are-those-who-mourn> Blessed are those who mourn Thomas Baby
Published in Edification

²⁶ <http://activechristianity.org/blessed-are-those-who-mourn> Blessed are those who mourn Thomas Baby
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constant. "If at any time we become accustomed to sin, something is wrong."²⁷ Mourning, like repentance, is not a once-in-a-while thing. It is a present and continuous experience as we try to overcome the fallen man and receive a new nature. The gospel of Jesus Christ involves a continuous learning and growing process, and mourning is the exact reaction to sin that we should continually have. Martin Luther felt that one's entire life must be one of continuous contrition and repentance -- not that we go around continually morose, but that we are ever aware of the evil and destructive capacity of sin, both ours and those around us.²⁸ This present tense should create a continual state of mourning for one's lifestyle. It is not an isolated or limited act in life; instead, it is a continual part of life. (PUT FOOTNOTE HERE)

They Shall Be Comforted

Early in Christ's ministry, by His own declaration, Jesus declared that He is the one who heals and binds up wounds, just as He is the one who comforts those who mourn. When He publically announced His Messianic calling in His hometown of Nazareth in the synagogue by reading Isaiah 61:1, He clearly foreshadowed the promises that are made in the second beatitude: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn" (Isaiah 61:1).

²⁷ <https://bible.org/seriespage/10-blessed-are-those-who-mourn-matthew-54> Bob Deffinbaugh, Blessed Are Those who Mourn, Studies in the Gospel of Matthew. August 25, 2004.

²⁸ Martin Luther, Including our Nation, cp Pr 14:34

Mourners can be comforted in this life and in the life to come. In their life, they shall be “comforted” with a sense of peace. This promise implies the special comfort that the mourner needs, which is the express work of the Holy Ghost, known as the Comforter. In our darkest hours, we can look to our Heavenly Father who will send the Holy Ghost which will bind up our wounds and provide rest (John 14:26). Here in this life, the Holy Ghost, whose work and office it is to comfort, also provides truth, and consolation. As the Spirit speaks to us, we are comforted and discover the love of God. The Holy Spirit has particular compassion for those who suffer. Part of this gracious promise made by the Saviour includes that we as mourners shall be comforted by the assurance that Christ gives us that our present mourning will be removed and that He will wipe away the tears from our eyes (1 Corinthians 13:54, 56). The presence of the Comforter sustains us as all our tears are eventually wiped away (Revelation 21:4). “Mourners shall be comforted [as] they get beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness” (Isaiah 61:3).

Mourners are also comforted by divine approbation and the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Disciples of Christ are promised that the sorrow, whatever its nature, shall not overwhelm them. Such sorrow is blessed in its endurance at the close of a divine, complete, and unallied comfort. That is the good news that only the Gospel brings. The mourners will be comforted by the one who created them, who loves them and knows them, the very one who gave them life.

To comfort all that mourn, the second Beatitude refers to the good news proclaimed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Isaiah saw the coming of Christ and his comfort when he prophesied, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it (Isaiah 40:1-5).

From the Saviour flows a hope of a better world where we will find complete comfort.

The Atonement of Jesus Christ offers immortality for all and Eternal Life. The gospel promises a place where death has lost its sting, every tear has been wiped away, and there is only life, love, beauty, and joy. No matter the dispensation, all humanity must recognize the truth that their own sins and the sins of the world cause them to be separated from God and experience spiritual death. To all persons, the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ offers the comfort that we can return to our Father in Heaven. Christ is always offering comfort. For example, it is powerful to note that *Jesus* approaches the *widow* in Luke 7:12-13, and not the other way around. Our Saviour is moved by the sight of her sorrow. Just as he knew the widow and her sorrows, he also knows us and our devastating losses as well as the little daily troubles. Just as He “approached the widow in her sorrow so that she could experience the hope found in Him, He comes to meet us when we, too, are full of sadness and despair.”²⁹

The Atonement of Jesus Christ leaves us not muddled with guilt nor mixed with fear for the life to come, but rather with joy, and the comfort that we will once again be reunited with our Heavenly Father who knows us perfectly. This assurance comforts our souls and acquaints us with Christ and His father. The promise in this Beatitude is not a promise for everyone, but rather for those disciples of Christ who have partaken of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and will

²⁹ https://www.catholicherald.com/faith/_blessed_are_those_who_mourn_/ Fr. Robert Wagner, The Arlington Catholic Herald, May 31, 2016.

one day enjoy the divine presence. They will be comforted in the hereafter when they are free from all the troubles of this life, and their sorrow has led to repentance. Because of the Atonement, they will experience the consolation that arises from forgiveness of sins, peace with God, and a clear conscience, and a lively hope of eternal life and immortality in the world to come (Moses 1:39).

Scriptures

- Psalms 119:158 I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.
- Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
- Jeremiah 9:1-2 Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!
- Luke 7:12-13 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.
- Luke 7:37-38 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and

did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

- Luke 19:41-42 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.
- John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;
- 2 Corinthians 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.
- 2 Corinthians 7:10-11 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.
- Revelation 21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.
- 3 Nephi 15:1 And now it came to pass that when Jesus had ended these sayings he cast his eyes round about on the multitude, and said unto them: Behold, ye have heard the things which I taught before I ascended to my Father; therefore, whoso remembereth these sayings of mine and doeth them, him will I raise up at the last day.

How to Become a Mourner Who is Comforted

How can we become a true mourner that can receive comfort? We must recognize those things that hinder us from true mourning, such as a love of sin, despair, giving up on God,

minimizing sin, and procrastinating repentance. The main way to become a mourner who is worthy of comfort is to repent. Godly sorrow, which worketh true repentance, creates a humble mind and a continual dependence on the acceptance and mercy of Jesus Christ to cleanse us. Genuine mourning is a prerequisite and a motivation for repentance. Repenting means to turn around, and as we do so, we turn to see that where we were going was wrong, and we come to loathe our previous direction. We want to turn around. To mourn is to recognize—not only intellectually, but emotionally—that we loathe our current path, and we turn from it. We then rejoice, not because we *were* sad, but because we were *made* sad to the point of wanting to repent. When you and I sorrow as God intended for us to do, that sorrow produces repentance, which leads to salvation. As English Anglican Priest John Stott asks,

“What kind of sorrow can it be which brings the joy of Christ’s blessing to those who feel it? It is plain from the context that those here promised comfort are not primarily those who mourn the loss of a loved one, but those who mourn the loss of their innocence, their righteousness, their self-respect. It is not the sorrow of bereavement to which Christ refers, but the sorrow of repentance. This is the second stage of spiritual blessing. It is one thing to be spiritually poor and acknowledge it; it is another to grieve and to mourn over it. Or, in more theological language, confession is one thing, contrition is another.”³⁰

The Sermon on the Mount directs us towards the day of judgment and illustrates to us how we will pass through that final judgment to enter into God’s presence. As Religious Scholar John Welch tells us, “This purpose is stated more clearly in the Sermon at the Temple than in the Sermon on the Mount. ‘Whoso remembereth these sayings of mine and doeth them, him will I raise up at the last day’ (3 Nephi 15:1). The purpose of this statement in the Sermon at the Temple is to encourage remembrance and to stimulate the people to keep the commandments

³⁰ John R.W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press 1985), pg#.

that the Lord has given.”³¹ Those of us that grieve over sin; that sorrow that we have committed sin; and that are afflicted, wounded, and disappointed that we have offended God will find comfort in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Through the merciful Atonement of the Saviour, those sins are forgiven. True mourning results in forgiveness, the greatest salve of comfort there is.

When we think of ourselves as superior to others, it means that God cannot help us, he cannot comfort us. It is only those who are sorrowful, repentant, who humbly realize their need and unrighteousness before God, who come to Him seeking His help, that He can truly comfort.³²

According to bible scholar Cooper P. Abrams III, the world will never know the happiness that can come from sadness. God does lift those that mourn over sin. Those that sorrow that they have committed sin, who are afflicted and wounded by the understanding that they have offended God, shall find comfort in the gospel of Jesus Christ, which gives full assurance of the immortality and Eternal Life of man through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Being at peace with God brings inward purpose and satisfaction to a softened heart. The person who truly mourns and seeks forgiveness finds true happiness, for blessed and happy are those that mourn.³³

³¹ John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple & Sermon on the Mount*, (Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1999),

³² <http://bible-truth.org/b-att3.htm> Cooper P. Abrams III How to Be Happy, Happy Are They That Mourn

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Edits

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Blessedness
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¹ Joseph F. Smith, Deseret News: Semi-Weekly, 17 Nov. 1861, 1.

² <https://www.gotquestions.org/blessed-are-those-who-mourn.html> Got Questions, What does blessed are those who mourn mean?

³ Simon Tugwell, The Beatitudes: Sounds in Christian Tradition, 1980.

~~one is motivated to experience.~~ ^{In a desire to} Instead, ~~we want~~ ^{we're} to be cheerful, pleasant, and comfortable ~~as~~
we shrink from suffering and sadness. It is paradoxical that Christ can call those who mourn
blessed. It is as if he is saying, as English Anglican Priest John Stott states "happy are the
unhappy."⁴ This Beatitude is contrary to logic. For almost everyone, it is instead deemed
blessed if we are prosperous and happy. But here Christ pronounces instead that to be
sorrowful is blessed. However, Jesus is not saying blessed are grim, cheerless Latter-day Saints.
Nor does he say blessed are those who are mourning over the difficulties of life. ^{As Simon Regell ... suffering & sadness} The subject of
mourning is sad and unpleasant, without the ~~blessedness of before~~ and the comfort which
comes after.⁵

Sorrow is a common experience, but ^{ing 5} true Christians mourn ^{from part of the world's} in a different way. Their
sorrow is sincere and with faith—they are comforted through the great comforter, the Holy

Ghost. That comfort includes a knowledge of Jesus Christ and His Atonement, which sanctifies
our sorrow. ^{then} ~~So~~ not every kind of mourning can be blessed, and the blessedness of that comfort
which our Redeemer assures us ^{was a result of the} ~~it attached to the~~ mourning. It is present and positive.⁶ When

~~someone goes through losing~~ ^{we lose} someone of an immediate closeness then a purifying process
develops a bond between ^{vs} them and others who have similarly gone through the same things.

This bond of love and unity creates a purifying process that the world cannot understand. ^{* - Put in share P} This
particular beatitude can be the most baffling in the quality it espouses, because as one looks at
a person who is mourning, they are not blessed—they are desolate. To think that one is

⁴ John Stott, The Beatitudes: Developing Spiritual Character

⁵ John Stott, The Beatitudes: Developing Spiritual Character

⁶ <https://www.studyLight.org/commentary/matthew/5-4.html> StudyLight.org verse-by-verse commentary Dr. T. Raffles

⁷ Royden G. Derrick, "The Beatitudes and Our Perfection," *General Conference*, April, 1977

supposed to be happy in a mortuary is antithetical to everything our culture teaches: pleasure always takes precedence over pain.⁸ Mourning is against our societal responses. In our society, we spend most of our lives trying to avoid sorrow and pain. It seems as if the greatest human desire is to seek happiness, and most of us make every effort to find as many entertaining diversions as we can to distract us from the vicissitudes of life. However, no one gets through this life without mourning. Weeping and mourning are part of human existence, and it is a gift to be able to cry. Shedding tears cleanses us emotionally, and it helps us deal with grief.]

* [It should be noted that the subject of all of the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount is plural. "The poor", "the mourners"—all are treated in a group context, meaning that "virtually all of even the normal but distressing vicissitudes of life are so much more bearable when they are shared!"⁹]

The Meaning of Mourning

Jesus selected the word He used to define mourning from among ~~four choices~~ ^{the} ~~English word *mourn* appears only ten times in the entire New Testament, and represents four different Greek words. There are~~ ^{Greek} four words used for sorrow, mourn, or grieve in the Greek New Testament: *lupeumai*, *throneo*, *kopto*, and *pantheo*. *Lupeumai* is a general word used for grief. *Throneo* has the idea of mere wailing or lamentation. *Kopto* is similar having the sense of an external show of grief, like the beating of the breast. *Pantheo* ^{he and Jesus chose} is the only one with the deep sense of inner grief that consumes the person. It has the idea of strong grief manifested externally. Or put another way, as Richard Trench says, ^{abit} ~~am~~ to grieve with a grief which so takes

⁸ David Warren, "Blessed are they that Mourn" *The Catholic Thing*, March 8, 2018 FORMAT

⁹ <https://pioneernt.com/2012/03/27/word-study-137-mourn-mourning/> The Pioneers' New TESTAMENT, A New Translation of the New Testament, with thoughts on living by it.

possession of the whole being that it cannot be hid.¹⁰ Mourning is always associated loss. The

Greek word *pentheo* is the strongest word for mourning in the Greek language. The Greek word

Jesus used for *mourn* in Matthew 5:4, *pentheo*, is used ten times in the New Testament

(Matthew 5:4; 9:15; Mark 16:10; Luke 6:25; 1 Cor. 5:2; 2 Cor. 12:21; James 4:9; and Rev. 18:11, 15, 19).

that Jesus could have used for deep emotional grief, sorrow, and mourning. *Pentheo* "It is defined as the kind of grief which takes such a hold on a man that it cannot be hid. It is not only the sorrow which brings an ache to the heart; it is the sorrow which brings the unrestrainable tears to the eyes."¹¹

and incorporates the idea of mourning
loss associated w/ in its way to lament...
Pantheo means to lament, such as the lament for the dead or for a severe, profound

loss. [It reflects an outward expression of sorrow as one experiences sadness or grief at

depressing circumstances or conditions.] True sadness at a loss, even a temporary loss, is

normal, not wrong, or unfaithful, it is even to be expected.

Mourning is an emotional response to loss. In our subdued culture and society mourning is not quite as evident as it is in other cultures. We hear such sayings as "big boys don't cry;"

but, Christ is saying ^{that} all cry, big boys included. [In Matthew, Christ does not say that all pain will go away; instead, He is saying that in certain circumstances of mourning, comfort will be

brought to bear. He is not saying that we will escape the things for which we mourn, but rather we will find God's comfort.¹²]

¹⁰ Richard Chenevix Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973), 238.

¹¹ William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p.93 I HAVE BOOK: FORMAT

¹² <https://bible.org/seriespage/10-blessed-are-those-who-mourn-matthew-54> Bob Deffinbaugh, *Blessed Are Those Who Mourn*, Studies in the Gospel of Matthew. August 25, 2004.

add something here

maybe...

Close to blessed mourning

add to section on comfort

(WORD ON MANUSCRIPT p. 6) Mark P. Shea tells us how universal mourning is:

Mourning is universal and common—as are all our deepest experiences. For the things which are most universal are also the things that are the most personal. Everybody falls in love. Everybody has felt fear. Everybody has known delight. . . .

And everybody mourns. We may believe that when we mourn we are utterly alone. But the truth is that when we mourn we join ranks with all the weeping children of Adam and Eve . . .

We experience this not only mourning for the death of loved ones, but for the loss of things, places, times, abilities, hopes, dreams, and many of the other goods of this passing world. ~~Mourning stalks us. We know that sooner or later our time will come and we hope to ward it off. So we chase death and loss away as soon as possible and we often act as though we have a sort of superstitious fear that it is "catching". So we avoid the grieving, lest we get some of it on us via some unseemly display of their shouts or tears or begging for the past to return. But for all that, mourning comes to us anyway—because God wills that we be blessed.~~ ¹³

If we love, we cannot escape mourning, for mourning is the result of having loved, then losing (CHECK MANUSCRIPT PAGE 7). Inevitably, that will occur in the lives of everyone. Though we know the Resurrection will occur, in this world a loved one leaving is still a loss. They that mourn are universal. edit!

Unblessed Mourning

~~Though mourning is universal, blessed mourning is not. "There is a sinful, inordinate, hopeless sorrow that can refuse to be comforted."~~ ^{Not all mourning ~~is~~ is blessed. Included in the unblessed mourning is} ~~There is a sinful, inordinate, hopeless sorrow that can refuse to be comforted."~~ ^{vs} ~~14 Pessimists may say that there are many griefs for which there is no remedy, so that life is not worth living. Christ did not mean to meet such a position or say there is no sorrow without remedy, nor did Christ just mean those that~~

¹³ Mark P. Shea, Salt and Light: The Commandments, the Beatitudes, and a Joyful Life. (____ ON MANUSCRIPT PAGE 6) 2013

Blessed Are Those Who Mourn, Catholic Exchange, April 21, 2010 <https://catholicexchange.com/blessed-are-those-who-mourn-2>

¹⁴ <https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PERSONAL/k/184/Beatitudes-Mourning.htm> The Beatitudes, Part Three: Mourning, by John W. Ritenbaugh, Forerunner, "Personal," March 1999

are sad; instead, he said those that are grieving. ^{ing that} There are types of mourners ^{for which he mourns.} who are NOT entitled to be blessed or receive comfort.

- Those who indulge ⁱⁿ the sorrow of discontent
- The inordinate sorrow for worldly losses
- Sorrow for wounded pride.
- The mourning of a melancholy disposition
- Sorrow for temporal distress
- Sorrow in adversity
- Sorrow because of disappointed hopes ¹⁵

In other words, all mourning is not always good or necessary. For instance, when David mourned over Absalom's death, it was very negative. Amnon wrongfully mourned because he could not have Tamar, his sister, Ahab mourned because he could not have Naboth's vineyard, and Samuel mourned because of Saul's loss of the kingdom. These expressions of mourning were inappropriate and show us that ~~not all mourners will be comforted~~ ^{in his promise to comfort those that mourn}. Christ is not speaking to everyone about all kinds of sadness; ~~In the Beatitude~~, Christ is definitely talking about specific people and certain kinds of mourning. ¹⁶

Two Kinds of Mourning

Blessed are they that mourn has the capability of meaning two things, either those that are afflicted with the loss of friends or possessions are blessed, or they that mourn over sins are ^{cond!}

¹⁵ <https://www.studylight.org/commentary/matthew/5-4.html> StudyLight.org verse-by-verse commentary
¹⁶ <https://bible.org/seriespage/10-blessed-are-those-who-mourn-matthew-54> Bob Deffinbaugh, Blessed Are Those who Mourn, Studies in the Bospel of Matthew. August 25, 2004. FORMAT

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color-like section

blessed. ¹⁷ These two types of mourning, most especially the second, are what most Christian scholars agree was what the savior meant. Undoubtedly, in the Bible and the Book of Mormon we can see that our Heavenly Father does approve of the character of those who mourn properly. There is something about the mindset of a righteous individual who is sorrowful that helps them "view both self and life itself from a more stable and realistic basis." ¹⁸ One might ask, "Could Jesus be speaking of a certain kind of mourning different from the kind of mourning associated with death, catastrophes, frustration of dashed hopes, and other tragic events?" ¹⁹

This second type of mourning, i.e., having a sorrow for our sins, is what our Savior is talking about in the Sermon on the Mount. "This sorrow is not the sorrow of the world that worketh "death" (2 Corinthians 7:10) for failure, suffering, and the consequences of sin, but the sorrow which flows out in tears that cleanse. It is the mourning over sin itself and the stain which it has left upon the soul. ^{is the right spiritual war} The apostle Paul spoke of this Godly sorrow for our sins that is essential to our spiritual progress (Romans 7:24-25). (Mourning is the appropriate response to sin, and the most appropriate manifestation of mourning would be repentance. It is wrong to experience sin and not mourn. Blessed are we if we do mourn for sin, for our own sins, for the unbelief of our hearts, for our daily infirmities, the sins of life, because we commit them against a God of love, grace, and mercy. However sorrowful or distressed we may be over such things, we are blessed." ^{more to pg 9} ²⁰

Mourning for sins
Grievous Sorrow

did quote?

¹⁷ <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/5-4.htm>
¹⁸ <https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PERSONAL/k/184/Beatitudes-Mourning.htm> The Beatitudes, Part Three: Mourning, by John W. Ritenbaugh, Forerunner, "Personal," March 1999
¹⁹ <https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PERSONAL/k/184/Beatitudes-Mourning.htm> The Beatitudes, Part Three: Mourning, by John W. Ritenbaugh, Forerunner, "Personal," March 1999
²⁰ <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/5-4.htm>

In an article that *Newsweek* published some years ago, it stated that American churches had stopped telling congregations they were sinners because it made them feel worse about themselves. How ironic it is that this is Jesus' very ^{win?} point.²¹ Some of us are modern Pharisees who do not see ourselves as sinners ^{and} who have a defective view of sin. We want to talk about a gospel of love, but we do not want to talk about sin, and few ever pray that they might have victory over ~~our~~ ^{their} sins. Instead, we ~~like~~ ^{love} a congenial God, who "accepts me the way I am."²²

On the other hand, true disciples of Jesus Christ constantly sense their ungodliness, and are constantly mourning over sin ^{for as they} and are mindfully attuned to them. ~~Our hearts are softened and do not fail us (D&C 88:91). A true Latter-day Saint is attuned to his or her ever-deepening relationship with their Heavenly Father), and they have much to mourn over because of their sins both of omission and commission. A daily sense of grief develops a disciple of Christ becomes more aware of their sins. A softened heart seeks for change and it admits wrong, which goes against most of what society dictates.~~ As John W. Ritenbaugh explains,

We of this generation face an uphill battle because, through such media as television and movies, we have vicariously experienced the breaking of God's law in unparalleled frequency and in vividly sympathetic ways. On the screen life is cheap, property is meaningless, sexual purity is scoffed at, stealing is fine "if it's necessary," and faithfulness is nerdish and corny. Where is God in it? How much of this world's attitudes have we unwittingly absorbed into our character? Is our conscience still tender? Is mourning over sin—ours and others'—a vital part of our relationship with God?²³

accept our sins

each day

As we become more aware of our sins, we become more aware of our sins, we become

keep part about softened heart?

²¹ Kenneth L. Woodward, "What Ever Happened to Sin?" *Newsweek* 2/5/95, www.newsweek.com/what-ever-happened-sin-185180.
²² <https://neverthirsty.org/bible-studies/life-of-christ-sermon-on-the-mount-late-a-d-31/happy-are-those-who-mourn/neverthirsty>, Happy Are Those Who Mourn,
²³ <https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PERSONAL/k/184/Beatitudes-Mourning.htm> The Beatitudes, Part Three: Mourning, by John W. Ritenbaugh, Forerunner, "Personal," March 1999

If we can look on sin without sorrow, then we have never truly come unto Christ. Amazingly, the God against whom we have sinned is the one who forgives sinners!²⁴ Mourning for sin is a pathway to progress and happiness, beginning with Godly sorrow in one's heart over sin. It is true that only those who really understand the reality of sin can appreciate forgiveness, and only those who repent can experience God's comfort.

more from R7
(K)

Godly sorrow is accompanied by an acknowledgment of our own sins, which is the first step of repentance. If ^{we} truly sorrow over my sins, it drives ^{us} ^{me} to ^{repent} so that ^{our} nature can change and ^{we} can overcome ^{our} fallen nature.²⁵ As Thomas Baby asks: "Are you brokenhearted over your inadequacy to be genuinely good to others? Do you see how far you are from living the life described in the Bible? Do you grieve that you are bound and are a prisoner of the sin that dwells within you? If you can answer yes, you will be comforted because your godly sorrow will produce repentance, which leads to action, to obedience and, ultimately, to salvation – to life."²⁶

Change title

The Present Tense of Mourning

It is important to note that the tense of the verb used in this Beatitude is not "have mourned" but "mourned."

Mourning is a present and continuous experience. ~~We do have much to mourn over.~~ ^{just as} Blessed are those that mourn is emphatically present tense and ongoing. ^{just as} ~~It is not just for those who from time to time experience mourning, but it is consistent and~~ ^{is} ~~ongoing.~~ ^{the blessed state people of this eden} ^(?) ^{mourning?}

²⁴ Sinclair, Ferguson, *Kingdom of Life in a Fallen World* (Carlisle, Penn: The Banner of Truth Trust 1987), pg #

²⁵ <http://activechristianity.org/blessed-are-those-who-mourn> Blessed are those who mourn Thomas Baby Published in Edification

²⁶ <http://activechristianity.org/blessed-are-those-who-mourn> Blessed are those who mourn Thomas Baby Published in Edification

constant. "If at any time we become accustomed to sin, something is wrong."²⁷ Mourning, like repentance, is not a once-in-a-while thing. It is a present and continuous experience as we try to overcome the fallen man and receive a new nature. The gospel of Jesus Christ involves a continuous learning and growing process, and mourning is the exact reaction to sin that we should continually have. Martin Luther felt that one's entire life must be one of continuous contrition and repentance -- not that we go around continually morose, but that we are ever aware of the evil and destructive capacity of sin, both ours and those around us.²⁸ This present tense should create a continual state of mourning for one's lifestyle. It is not an isolated or limited act in life; instead, it is a continual part of life. (PUT FOOTNOTE HERE)

They Shall Be Comforted

Early in ^{his} Christ's ministry, by His own declaration, Jesus declared that He is the one who heals and binds up wounds, just as He is the one who comforts those who mourn. When He publically announced His Messianic calling in His hometown of Nazareth in the synagogue by reading Isaiah 61:1, He clearly foreshadowed the promises that are made in the second beatitude: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn"

(Isaiah 61:1).

*In the synagogue of his hometown of Nazareth
Early in his ministry, Jesus publicly proclaimed his messianic calling by reading Isaiah 61:1 and announcing that in him a
word had been fulfilled. In it he clearly foreshadowed -- beatitude.*

²⁷ <https://bible.org/seriespage/10-blessed-are-those-who-mourn-matthew-54> Bob Deffinbaugh, Blessed Are Those who Mourn, Studies in the Gospel of Matthew. August 25, 2004.

²⁸ Martin Luther, Including our Nation, cp Pr 14:34

Wk of Christ's mission

by the spirit

Mourners can be comforted in this life and in the life to come. In their life, they shall be

"comforted" with a sense of peace. This promise implies the special comfort that the mourner

[which is that special gift comfort to make for the way - the comfort
This year, a special gift from God, is the response

needs, which is the express work of the Holy Ghost, known as the Comforter.] In our darkest

re work

hours, we can look to our Heavenly Father who will send the Holy Ghost which will bind up our

by work of the will

wounds and provide rest (John 14:26). Here in this life, the Holy Ghost, whose work and office it

is to comfort, also provides truth, and consolation. As the Spirit speaks to us, we are comforted

and discover the love of God. The Holy Spirit has particular compassion for those who suffer.

Part of this gracious promise made by the Saviour includes that we as mourners shall be

comforted by the assurance that Christ gives us that our present mourning will be removed and

that He will wipe away the tears from our eyes (1 Corinthians 15:55, 56). The presence of the

Comforter sustains us as all our tears are eventually wiped away (Revelation 21:4). "Mourners

shall be comforted [as] they get beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of

praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isaiah 61:3).

Mourners are also comforted by divine approbation and the good news of the Gospel of

Jesus Christ. Disciples of Christ are promised that the sorrow, whatever its nature, shall not

overwhelm them. Such sorrow is blessed in its endurance at the close of a divine, complete,

and unallied comfort. That is the good news that only the Gospel brings. The mourners will be

comforted by the one who created them, who loves them and knows them, the very one who

gave them life. (Find overwhelm scripture) | Cor 13

Comforted by Spirit

Letter 13

Comforted by divine approbation & by Gospel

To comfort all that mourn, the second Beatitude refers to the good news proclaimed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Isaiah saw the coming of Christ and his comfort when he prophesied, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it (Isaiah 40:1-5).

comfort of
eternal life

From the Saviour flows a hope of a better world where we will find complete comfort.

The Atonement of Jesus Christ offers immortality for all and Eternal Life. ^{for the entire} The gospel promises a place where death has lost its sting, every tear has been wiped away, and there is only life, love, beauty, and joy. No matter the dispensation, all humanity must recognize the truth that their own sins and the sins of the world cause them to be separated from God and experience

comfort with
God's love

spiritual death. To all persons, the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ offers the comfort ^{despite this obstacle} that we can return to our Father in Heaven. Christ is always offering comfort. ~~For example,~~ it is powerful to note that *Jesus* approaches the *widow* in Luke 7:12-13, and not the other way around. Our Saviour ^{was} ~~is~~ moved by the sight of her sorrow. Just as he knew the widow and her sorrows, he also knows us and our devastating losses as well as the ~~little~~ daily troubles. Just as He "approached the widow in her sorrow so that she could experience the hope found in Him, He comes to meet us when we, too, are full of sadness and despair."²⁹

The Atonement of Jesus Christ leaves us not muddled with guilt nor mixed with fear for the life to come, but rather with joy, and the comfort that we will once again be reunited with our Heavenly Father who knows us perfectly. This assurance comforts our souls and acquaints us with Christ and His father. The promise in this Beatitude is not a promise for everyone, but rather for those disciples of Christ who ^{se} have partaken of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and will

²⁹ https://www.catholicherald.com/faith/_blessed_are_those_who_mourn_/ Fr. Robert Wagner, The Arlington Catholic Herald, May 31, 2016.

~~(one day enjoy the divine presence. They will be comforted in the hereafter when they are free from all the troubles of this life, and their sorrow has led to repentance. Because of the Atonement, they will experience the consolation that arises from forgiveness of sins, peace with God, and a clear conscience, and a lively hope of eternal life and immortality in the world to come (Moses 1:39).~~

then to partake of the atonement of Jesus Christ

Scriptures

- Psalms 119:158 I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.
- Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
- Jeremiah 9:1-2 Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!
- Luke 7:12-13 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.
- Luke 7:37-38 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and

did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

- Luke 19:41-42 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.
- John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;
- 2 Corinthians 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.
- 2 Corinthians 7:10-11 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.
- Revelation 21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.
- 3 Nephi 15:1 And now it came to pass that when Jesus had ended these sayings he cast his eyes round about on the multitude, and said unto them: Behold, ye have heard the things which I taught before I ascended to my Father; therefore, whoso remembereth these sayings of mine and doeth them, him will I raise up at the last day.

How to Become a Mourner Who is Comforted

How can we become a true mourner that can receive comfort? We must recognize those things that hinder us from true mourning, such as a love of sin, despair, giving up on God,

minimizing sin, and procrastinating repentance. The main way to become a mourner who is worthy of comfort is to repent. Godly sorrow, which worketh true repentance, creates a humble mind and a continual dependence on the acceptance and mercy of Jesus Christ to cleanse us. Genuine mourning is a prerequisite and a motivation for repentance. Repenting means to turn around, and as we do so, we turn to see that where we were going was wrong, and we come to loathe our previous direction. We want to turn around. To mourn is to recognize—not only intellectually, but emotionally—that we loathe our current path, and we turn from it. We then rejoice, not because we *were* sad, but because we were *made* sad to the point of wanting to repent. When you and I sorrow as God intended for us to do, that sorrow produces repentance, which leads to salvation. As English Anglican Priest John Stott asks,

“What kind of sorrow can it be which brings the joy of Christ’s blessing to those who feel it? It is plain from the context that those here promised comfort are not primarily those who mourn the loss of a loved one, but those who mourn the loss of their innocence, their righteousness, their self-respect. It is not the sorrow of bereavement to which Christ refers, but the sorrow of repentance. This is the second stage of spiritual blessing. It is one thing to be spiritually poor and acknowledge it; it is another to grieve and to mourn over it. Or, in more theological language, confession is one thing, contrition is another.”³⁰

The Sermon on the Mount directs us towards the day of judgment and illustrates to us how we will pass through that final judgment to enter into God’s presence. As Religious Scholar John Welch tells us, “This purpose is stated more clearly in the Sermon at the Temple than in the Sermon on the Mount. ‘Whoso remembereth these sayings of mine and doeth them, him will I raise up at the last day’ (3 Nephi 15:1). ~~The purpose of this statement in the Sermon at the Temple is to encourage remembrance and to stimulate the people to keep the commandments~~

³⁰ John R.W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press 1985), pg#.

Linking sorrow
that the Lord has given."³¹ Those of us that grieve over sin; that sorrow that we have committed sin; and that are afflicted, wounded, and disappointed that we have offended God will find comfort in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Through the merciful Atonement of the Saviour, those sins are forgiven. True mourning results in forgiveness, the greatest salve of comfort there is. *close comes back to quote by Welch.*

3 Humility When we think of ourselves as superior to others, it means that God cannot help us, he cannot comfort us. It is only those who are sorrowful, repentant, who humbly realize their need and unrighteousness before God, who come to Him seeking His help, that He can truly comfort.³²

According to bible scholar Cooper P. Abrams III, the world will never know the happiness that can come from sadness. God does lift those that mourn over sin. Those that sorrow that they have committed sin, who are afflicted and wounded by the understanding that they have offended God, shall find comfort in the gospel of Jesus Christ, which gives full assurance of the immortality and Eternal Life of man through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Being at peace with God brings inward purpose and satisfaction to a softened heart. The person who truly mourns and seeks forgiveness finds true happiness, for blessed and happy are those that mourn.³³

Keep earthen hearts pliable or take this out

³¹ John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple & Sermon on the Mount*, (Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1999),

³² <http://bible-truth.org/b-att3.htm> Cooper P. Abrams III How to Be Happy, Happy Are They That Mourn

³³ <http://bible-truth.org/b-att3.htm> Cooper P. Abrams III How to Be Happy, Happy Are They That Mourn

Final Version with Edits Incorporated

Chapter _

Blessed are those that mourn: for they shall be comforted **(Matthew 5:4).**

It is not uncommon to fear death. But perhaps what we dislike more than death itself is the mourning that is so often its burdensome companion. Events associated with grief, we simply want to avoid, but in doing so, we avoid that very something that the Beatitudes tell us we ought to deal with and, even more, we ought to practice. The Beatitudes not only prescribe to us what it is we ought to practice, but leave us with a promise as well: “blessed are those that mourn for they shall be comforted” (Matt 5:4).

In scriptural terminology, being blessed usually means being happy, but in the context of Matthew 5 the term *blessed* instead most likely indicates an enviable state. Jesus contrasts the worldly concept of happiness with blessedness which comes from having a right relationship with God.¹

Blessed Are Those that Mourn

How could a person who is mourning be blessed? It is paradoxical that Christ can call those who mourn blessed. It is as if he is saying, as English Anglican Priest John Stott states, “happy are the unhappy.”² However, Jesus is not saying blessed are grim, cheerless Latter-day Saints. Nor does he say blessed are those who are mourning over the difficulties of life. This particular beatitude can be the most baffling in the quality it espouses, because as one looks at

¹ D. A. Carson, *Jesus' Sermon on the Mount: And His Confrontation with the World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Unit, 1999).

² John Stott, *The Beatitudes: Developing Spiritual Character: 8 Studies with Commentary for Individuals or Groups* (Downer's Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 17.

a person who is mourning, they are not blessed—they are desolate. To think that one is supposed to be happy in a mortuary is antithetical to everything our culture teaches: pleasure always takes precedence over pain.³

Mourning is against our societal responses. In our society, we spend most of our lives trying to avoid sorrow and pain. However, no one gets through this life without mourning. Weeping and mourning are part of human existence, and it is a gift to be able to cry. Shedding tears cleanses us emotionally and helps us deal with grief. As Simon Tugwell tells us, “Blessed are those that mourn is, paradoxically, a more necessary message than ‘Rejoice in the Lord always,’ because there can be no true rejoicing until we have stopped running away from mourning.”⁴ In our quest to be cheerful, pleasant, and comfortable, we shrink from suffering and sadness, often denying ourselves the promised comfort which follows mourning.⁵

Mourning as a Purifying Process

In Matthew 5, Christ does not say that all pain will go away; instead, he is saying that in certain circumstances of mourning, comfort will be brought to bear. He is not saying that we will escape the things for which we mourn, but rather we will find God’s comfort.⁶ The blessedness of that comfort which Christ assures us comes as we mourn together. It should be noted that the subject of all of the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount is plural: “the poor”, “the mourners”—all are treated in a group context, meaning that “virtually all of even the

³ David Warren, “Blessed are they that Mourn” *The Catholic Thing*, March 8, 2018, <https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2014/03/08/blessed-are-they-that-mourn/>

⁴ Simon Tugwell, *The Beatitudes: Sounds in Christian Tradition*, (Springfield, Ill.:Templegate Publishing, 1986), 61.

⁵ John Stott, *The Beatitudes: Developing Spiritual Character*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press, 2008), 16.

⁶ Robert L. Deffinbaugh, “10. Blessed Are Those Who Mourn (Matthew 5:4),” *Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, August 25, 200, <https://bible.org/seriespage/10-blessed-are-those-who-mourn-matthew-54>

normal but distressing vicissitudes of life are so much more bearable when they are shared!”⁷

When we lose someone of an immediate closeness, a bond of love and unity develops between us and others who have gone through a similar loss. This bond of love and unity creates a purifying process that the world cannot understand.⁸

The Meaning of Mourning

Jesus selected the word he used to define mourning from among four Greek words used for *sorrow*, *mourn*, or *grieve* in the Greek New Testament: *lupeumai*, *throneo*, *kopto*, and *pantheo*. *Lupeumai* is a general word used for grief. *Throneo* has the idea of mere wailing or lamentation. *Kopto* is similar to *Throneo*, having the sense of an external show of grief, like the beating of the breast. *Pentheo*, the word Jesus selected, is the strongest word for mourning in the Greek language. It is the only type of mourning with a deep sense of inner grief that consumes those who manifest it. It is, as Anglican Archbishop Richard Trench explains, to grieve with a grief which so takes possession of the whole being that it cannot be hid. *Pentheo*, in its truest form, is to lament, such as the lament for the dead or for a severe, profound loss.⁹

Mourning is Universal

True sadness at a loss, even a temporary loss, is normal, not wrong, or unfaithful. It is even to be expected. Mourning is an emotional response to loss. In our subdued culture and society mourning is not quite as evident as it is in other cultures. We hear such sayings as “big

⁷ “Word Study #137—Mourn Mourning,” *The Pioneers’ New Testament: A New Translation of the New Testament, with Thoughts on Living by It*. <https://pioneernt.com/2012/03/27/word-study-137-mourn-mourning>

⁸ Royden G. Derrick, “The Beatitudes and Our Perfection,” *Ensign*, May 1977, 58.

⁹ Richard Chenevix Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973), 253-254.

boys don't cry;" but, Christ is saying that all cry, big boys included. Apologetic Mark P. Shea tells us how universal mourning is:

Mourning is universal and common—as are all our deepest experiences. In fact, the things which are most universal are also the things that are the most personal. Everybody falls in love. Everybody feels fear. Everybody has known delight. ... And everybody mourns. We may think that when we mourn we are utterly alone. But the truth is that [when we mourn] we join the ranks of all the weeping children of Adam and Eve. ... We experience this not only mourning for the death of loved ones, but for the loss of things, places, times, abilities, hopes, dreams, and many of the other goods of this passing world.¹⁰

If we love, we cannot escape mourning, for mourning is the result of having loved, then lost the one we loved. Inevitably, this loss will occur in the lives of all who ever live and love. They that mourn is universal.

Unblessed Mourning

Mourning is universal. However, not all mourning is blessed. Included in this unblessed mourning is “a sinful, inordinate, hopeless sorrow that can refuse to be comforted.”¹¹ This is only one example of unblessed mourning; there are many more types of mourning for which mourners are **NOT** entitled to be blessed or receive comfort:

- The sorrow of discontent
- The inordinate sorrow for worldly losses
- Sorrow for wounded pride
- The mourning of a melancholy disposition
- Sorrow for temporal distress

¹⁰ Mark P. Shea, *Salt and Light: The Commandments, the Beatitudes, and a Joyful Life*. (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Publishers, 2013), 101.

¹¹ John W. Ritenbaugh, “The Beatitudes, Part Three: Mourning,” *Forerunner*, March 1999, <https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PERSONAL/k/184/Beatitudes-Mourning.htm>

- Sorrow in adversity
- Sorrow because of disappointed hopes¹²

All mourning is not always good or necessary. For instance, Amnon wrongfully mourned because he could not have Tamar, his sister; Ahab mourned because he could not have Naboth's vineyard; and Samuel mourned because of Saul's loss of the kingdom. These expressions of mourning were inappropriate and show us that in His promise to comfort those that mourn, Christ is not speaking to everyone about all kinds of sadness: He is speaking of a specific type of character and certain kinds of mourning.¹³

Two Kinds of Mourning

Blessed are they that mourn has the capability of meaning two things: either (1) those that are afflicted with the loss of friends or possessions are blessed, or (2) they that mourn over sins are blessed.¹⁴ These two types of mourning are what most Christian scholars agree was what the Savior meant. While there are many scriptures that promise comfort for those afflicted with loss, the true blessed state spoken of in the Sermon on the Mount is a result of the second type of mourning: sorrow for sin. It is specifically this type of sorrow that our Savior is speaking of when he says, "Blessed are those that mourn." This sorrow "is not the sorrow of the world . . . for failure, suffering, and the consequences of sin, but [rather] . . . is the mourning over sin itself and the stain which it has left upon the soul."¹⁵ The Apostle Paul taught that this Godly sorrow for our sins . . . "is essential to our spiritual progress" (Romans 7:24-25).¹⁶ It is

¹² Joseph S Exell, *The Biblical Illustrator: St. Matthew* (London: J. Nisbet and Co., Publisher, 1900), 46-47.

¹³ Robert L. Deffinbaugh, "10. Blessed Are Those Who Mourn (Matthew 5:4)," *Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, August 25, 2004, <https://bible.org/seriespage/10-blessed-are-those-who-mourn-matthew-54>

¹⁴ Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998), 1: 43.

¹⁵ Charles J. Ellicott, *A New Testament Commentary for English Readers* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1878), 20.

¹⁶ Royden G. Derrick, "The Way to Perfection," *General Conference*, April, 1989, 96.

wrong to experience sin and not mourn. Blessed are we if we do mourn for sin, for our own sins, for the unbelief of our hearts, for our daily infirmities, the sins of life, because we commit them against a God of love, grace, and mercy. However sorrowful or distressed we may be over such things, we are blessed.¹⁷

Godly Sorrow: Sorrow for Sin

An article that *Newsweek* published some years ago stated that American churches had stopped telling congregations they were sinners because it made them feel worse about themselves. How ironic it is that this is Jesus' very point: we all sin.¹⁸ Some of us are modern Pharisees who do not see ourselves as sinners with a defective view of sin. We want to talk about a gospel of love, but we do not want to talk about sin. Instead, we like a congenial God who "accepts me the way I am."¹⁹

On the other hand, true disciples of Jesus Christ constantly sense their ungodliness, and are mindfully attuned to their sins. As we become more aware of, and mourn over our sins, we become attuned to our ever-deepening relationship with our Heavenly Father. As Clergymen John W. Ritenbaugh observes, "We of this generation face an uphill battle because, through such media as television and movies, we have vicariously experienced the breaking of God's law in unparalleled frequency and in vividly sympathetic ways. ... Where is God in it? ... Is our

¹⁷ John Gill, "Matthew 5:4 Commentary," *Bible Study Tools*, 2018, <https://www.bibletools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/matthew-5-4.html>

¹⁸ Kenneth L. Woodward, "What Ever Happened to Sin?" *Newsweek*, February 5, 1995.

¹⁹ John Calahan, "Happy Are Those Who Mourn," *Never Thirsty*, <https://neverthirsty.org/bible-studies/life-of-christ-sermon-on-the-mount-late-a-d-31/happy-are-those-who-mourn/NeverThirsty>.

conscience still tender? Is mourning over sin—ours and others'—a vital part of our relationship with God?"²⁰

If we can look on sin without sorrow, then we have never truly come unto Christ. Amazingly, the God against whom we have sinned is the one who forgives sinners!²¹ Only those who really understand the reality of sin can appreciate forgiveness, and only those who repent can experience God's comfort. The most appropriate manifestation of mourning is repentance. Thus mourning for sin becomes a pathway to progress and happiness, and this path begins with Godly sorrow.

Godly sorrow is accompanied by an acknowledgment of our own sins, which is the first step of repentance. If we truly sorrow over our sins, it drives us to repent so that our nature can change and we can overcome our fallen nature. As Christian Thomas Baby asks: "Are you brokenhearted over your inadequacy to be genuinely good to others? Do you see how far you are from living the life described in the Bible? Do you grieve that you are bound and are a prisoner of the sin that dwells within you? If you can answer yes, you will be comforted because your godly sorrow will produce repentance, which leads to action, to obedience and, ultimately, to salvation—to life."²²

Continual Mourning

It is important to note that the tense of the verb used in this Beatitude is not the past perfect *have mourned* but the present *mourn*. Just as *mourning* is a present and continuous

²⁰ John W. Ritenbaugh, "The Beatitudes, Part Three: Mourning," *Forerunner*, March 1999, <https://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/PERSONAL/k/184/Beatitudes-Mourning.htm>

²¹ Sinclair Ferguson, *Kingdom of Life in a Fallen World* (Carlisle, Penn: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 19.

²² Thomas Baby, "Blessed are Those Who Mourn," *Edification*, <http://activechristianity.org/blessed-are-those-who-mourn>.

experience, *blessed are those that mourn* is emphatically present tense and ongoing. Mourning is the exact reaction to sin that we should continually have: If at any time we become accustomed to sin, something is wrong.²³ “Martin Luther felt that one's entire life must be one of continuous contrition and repentance—not that we go around continually morose, but that we are ever aware of the evil and destructive capacity of sin, both ours and that of those around us.”²⁴ Mourning, like repentance, is not a once-in-a-while thing; it is a present and continuous experience as we recognize our sins and follies, try to overcome the fallen man, and receive a new nature.

They Shall Be Comforted

Early in His ministry, Jesus declared that he is the one who heals and binds up wounds, just as he is the one who comforts those who mourn. In the synagogue of his hometown of Nazareth, Jesus publicly proclaimed his messianic calling when he declared himself the fulfillment of the scripture found in the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, first verse: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn” (Isaiah 61:1). In reading this scripture near the start of his ministry, Christ clearly foreshadowed the promises that he would later make in the second beatitude: mourners can be comforted.

²³ Robert L. Deffinbaugh, “10. Blessed Are Those Who Mourn (Matthew 5:4),” *Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, August 25, 2004, <https://bible.org/seriespage/10-blessed-are-those-who-mourn-matthew-54>

²⁴ Martin Luther, *Including our Nation*, cp. Pr. 14:34, as cited in Precept Austin, “Matthew 5:4 Commentary,” http://preceptaustin.org/matthew_54-5

In this life, mourners shall be “comforted” by the Holy Spirit with a sense of peace. This promise implies the special comfort that the mourner needs, which is the express work of the Holy Ghost, known as the Comforter. In our darkest hours, we can look to our Heavenly Father who, through the gift of the Holy Ghost, will bind up our wounds and provide us rest (John 14:26). Here in this life, the Holy Ghost, whose work and office it is to comfort, also provides truth and consolation. As the Spirit speaks to us, we discover the love of God, and we are comforted. Christ, too, comforts us with his assurance that our present mourning will be removed and that he will wipe away the tears from our eyes (1 Corinthians 13:55, 56). The presence of the Comforter sustains us as all our tears are eventually wiped away (Revelation 21:4). “Mourners shall be comforted [as] they get beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness” (Isaiah 61:3).

Mourners are also comforted by divine approbation and the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Disciples of Christ are promised that their sorrow, whatever its nature, shall not overwhelm them (Mosiah 24:15, Alma 26:27). Such sorrow is blessed in its endurance by divine, complete, and unallied comfort. That is the good news that only the gospel brings. Mourners will be comforted by the one who created them, who loves them and knows them, the very one who gave them life. To comfort all that mourn, the second Beatitude, refers to the good news proclaimed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Isaiah saw the coming of Christ and his comfort when he prophesied,

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be

made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it" (Isaiah 40:1-5).

From the Savior flows a hope of a better world where we will find complete comfort.

The Atonement of Jesus Christ offers immortality for all and Eternal Life for the faithful. The gospel promises a place where death has lost its sting, every tear has been wiped away, and there is only life, love, beauty, and joy.

No matter the dispensation, all humanity must recognize the truth that their own sins and the sins of the world cause them to be separated from God and experience spiritual death. To all persons, the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ offers the comfort that, despite this obstacle, we can return to our Father in Heaven. Christ is eternally offering comfort. For example, it is powerful to note that in Luke 7:12-13 it is *Jesus* who approaches the *widow*, and not the other way around. Our Savior is moved by the sight of her sorrow. Just as he knew the widow and her sorrows, he also knows us and our devastating losses as well as the smaller daily tribulations. Just as he "approached the widow in her sorrow so that she could experience the hope found in him, he comes to meet us when we, too, are full of sadness and despair."²⁵

The Atonement of Jesus Christ leaves us not muddled with guilt nor mixed with fear for the life to come, but rather with joy, and the comfort that we will once again be reunited with our Heavenly Father who knows us perfectly. This assurance comforts our souls and acquaints us with Christ and His father. The promise in this Beatitude is not a promise for everyone, but rather for those disciples of Christ whose sorrow has led them to repent and partake of the

²⁵Robert Wagner, "Blessed are those who mourn," *The Arlington Catholic Herald*, May 31, 2016 https://www.catholicherald.com/faith/_blessed_are_those_who_mourn.

Atonement of Jesus Christ. Because of the Atonement, they will experience the consolation that arises from forgiveness of sins, peace with God, a clear conscience, and a lively hope of eternal life and immortality (Moses 1:39). There, free from the troubles and sorrows of this life, they will find everlasting comfort and eternal rest.

What does mourning look like in the scriptures?

- “I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word” (Psalms 119:158).
- “Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” (Jeremiah 9:1-2).
- “Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not” (Luke 7:12-13).
- “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever” (John 14:16).
- “Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God” (2 Corinthians 1:4).
- “And now it came to pass that when Jesus had ended these sayings he cast his eyes round about on the multitude, and said unto them: Behold, ye have heard the things which I taught before I ascended to my Father; therefore, whoso remembereth these sayings of mine and doeth them, him will I raise up at the last day” (3 Nephi 15:1).

How can we become a true mourner who can receive comfort?

--Recognize those things that hinder you from true mourning

“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes” (Luke 19:41-42).

Among those things that can hinder us from true mourning are love of sin, despair, giving up on God, minimizing sin, and procrastinating repentance.

--Let mourning lead you to repentance

“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death” (2 Corinthians 7:10-11).

The main way to become a mourner who is worthy of comfort is to repent. Godly sorrow, which worketh true repentance, creates a humble mind and a continual dependence on the acceptance and mercy of Jesus Christ to cleanse us. Genuine mourning is a prerequisite and a motivation for repentance. To mourn is to recognize—not only intellectually, but emotionally—that we loathe our current path, and we turn from it. We then rejoice, not because we *were* sad, but because we were *made* sad to the point of wanting to repent. When you and I sorrow as God intended for us to do, that sorrow produces repentance, which leads to salvation. As English Anglican Priest John Stott asks, “What kind of sorrow can it be which brings the joy of Christ’s blessing to those who feel it? It is plain from the context that those here promised comfort are not primarily those who mourn the loss of a loved one, but those who mourn the

loss of their innocence, their righteousness, their self-respect. It is not the sorrow of bereavement to which Christ refers, but the sorrow of repentance.”²⁶

--Seek humility.

“And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment” (Luke 7:37-38).

When we think of ourselves as superior to others, it means that God cannot help us and he cannot comfort us. It is only those who are sorrowful and repentant, who humbly realize their need and unrighteousness before God, and who come to Him seeking His help that he can truly comfort.²⁷

--Take comfort in God’s promises and in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Revelations 21:4).

God does lift those that mourn over sin. Those that sorrow that they have committed sin, who are afflicted and wounded by the understanding that they have offended God, shall find comfort in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which gives full assurance of the immortality and Eternal

²⁶ John R.W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press 1985), 40-41.

²⁷ Cooper P. Abrams III, “How to Be Happy, Happy Are They That Mourn,” <http://bible-truth.org/b-att3.htm>

Life of man through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Through the merciful Atonement of the Savior, our sins are forgiven. True mourning results in forgiveness, the greatest salve of comfort there is. The person who truly mourns and seeks forgiveness finds true happiness, for blessed and happy are those that mourn.²⁸

²⁸ *Ibid.*