

Blessed Are the Weeping, Part 2

Luke 6:21

The reality of sin is what makes us weep. Not everyone though, wants to acknowledge their sadness and sorrow over their sin. Many people want to do what Adam and Eve did after committing the transgression, that is, to cover over the shame of their guilt with that which cannot cover us. More lies, more distractions, more pleasures. We put Band-Aids on our cancer and then we wonder why, why do we still feel ill? Another evidence of our descent into the state of death that God said would result from transgressing this clear command.

Notice what happened in Genesis 3, after Adam and Eve transgressed. How they experienced the separation of death that God promised would be the consequence of their sin. Genesis 3:7, we see they felt the immediate shame of their guilt, they hid from one another. That's shame, folks. Whenever you see people blame shifting, denying, lying, that's called shame. And, they sense their guilt and they want to hide.

So they hide with words, they hide with putting you off, they hide with making you feel bad for confronting them, all of those things. That's shame. It says in Genesis 3:7, "The eyes of both of them were opened, they knew that they were naked, so they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin cloths." Look, hiding, was futile. Fig leaves don't last.

And yet, how many react today to the shame of sin's guilt in the exact same way? They cannot keep covering their sin, they have to keep finding different distractions, different things. More alcohol, more drugs, more perversion, whatever it is their chasing to cover over the shame of their guilt.

Relation to God, look at Genesis 3:8, "They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Sounds like a typical cool of the day afternoon. The man and his wife, they didn't run to him. It says, "They hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden." That doesn't make sense, at all! He's the creator, he made the

garden, he probably knows every leaf on every tree. Really hard to play hide and seek with the omnipresent, all-knowing God.

But that just tells you and shows you how their minds were immediately affected by sin, immediately darkened. They're no longer, here, able to think clearly, to reason accurately. This is called the noetic effects of sin. *Noe* comes from the word *nous*, refers to the mind. Sin distorts our rational thinking, which is what we see in the attempt of Adam and Eve to hide from the all-knowing, ever-present God. The death of relationship with God and with mankind.

That was the immediate result of The Fall. To be cut off from the living God, that is the essence of all death. That is the reason for weeping, folks. As we keep reading the Genesis account, we see the account of the curses on man and woman. For the woman, pain in childbearing. For the man, toil and pain in providing for the family, sorrow, weeping. As we keep reading in Genesis, we read the tragic news headlines. Adam and Eve's firstborn son, Cain, killed their second born son, Abel. More, more sorrow, and more weeping.

We continue in Genesis. Lamech, one of Cain's descendants, he decided to depart from the one man, one woman pattern of creation. He took for himself two wives. One's not good enough. And then he became boastful. "I've killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain's revenge is seven-fold then Lamech's is seventy-seven fold." He's taking the curse and turning into a reason to boast. Self-centeredness, arrogance, and pitiless vengeance. More sorrow, more weeping, all due to sin.

More death ensued from there. You trace the genealogy of the human race in Genesis 5, and that refrain is relentless, and he died, and he died, and he died, and he died, all through the chapter, verse 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, and on and on through the rest of the chapter. Such corruption filled the earth in Genesis 6:5 that God sent the worldwide flood as a judgement. He started over with Noah and his sons.

But then, when you, when you read what happened after they all emerged from the ark, you quickly discover that sin was a

stowaway on the ark. Sin got aboard the ark with them, hiding out in the recesses of their hearts. No sooner had Noah disembarked, but he planted a vineyard, he got drunk, he inadvertently exposed himself, he brought shame and ridicule from his son, Ham, who in turn dishonored his father, and a curse ensued, and so the long tale of sin, it started in Genesis 3 continued, and it still continues.

On it goes through Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, all the way through the law of Moses. On into the former prophets, the latter prophets, the entire Old Testament, every book in it, the consistent, relentless testimony of Scripture is this connection between sin and sorrow, between sin and weeping. Sin, folks, is the cause of all of our weeping.

As a pastor, God has allowed me the privilege of seeing people at their very best, as the Spirit and the Word work to regenerate them, to convert them, to snatch them from eternal death. And then after that, to watch the Spirit use his word, use God's word to renew their minds, to transform their lives, to make them productive and fruitful and joyful Christians with life and blessedness. That is such a joy to me!

Even in the face of what Jesus describes here in Luke 6:22-23 when Christians experience even hatred and exclusion, revulsion, spurning for the sake of the Son of Man, I have watched people, Christians, stand firm, strong and confident, emboldened by the grace of God, it hurts, yes, but they stand firm. And blessed are they, for their reward in heaven is great.

But beloved, as a pastor, I've also witnessed the tragic effects of sin, and how it causes such profound sadness and sorrow. I'm not trying to be dramatic here, but like every shepherd, I've experienced many long and weary days, many restless and sometimes even sleepless nights because of the weeping over sin. I've watched people depart from the truth, because their minds have been poisoned by lies, or because of petty offenses. Their hearts become embittered against somebody else. I've watched necks stiffened by pride, ears becoming dull, eyes becoming blind, because they had no love of truth, they had no humility to receive it. It causes me to weep.

I've watched marriages ripped apart. Prideful, angry, embittered husbands. Rebellious, headstrong wives. I've watched the young children, whose world has been torn apart, completely overturned, as the two most precious adults in their lives spew out hatred toward each other. I've seen the devastating effects of adultery. I've seen the enslaving degradation and the shame of people caught in pornography.

I've watched people love the world, and turn away from the truth they understand, refusing to look ahead to the consequences that they know they are going to face one day. And they give themselves fully to the fleeting pleasures of sin. All the while you watch as the chains of their enslavement to sin and Satan and death grow tighter and tighter and more constricting and suffocating. And they seem afraid to leave the enslavement, the bondage.

You don't have to be a pastor to see all that. We can all bear witness if we look closely enough. The mourning and the sorrow, the weeping and the sadness, it's so profoundly tragic and heartbreaking, and that brings us to a second point. Which, because of the sake, for the sake of time I just have time to

state it, read a supporting scripture to it, and then move on for the sake of time. So, point two, Jesus has entered into all of our weeping. As I was preparing this point, it kind of became its own sermon, so, another time, perhaps. Okay? But Jesus has entered into all of our weeping. I want you to turn over to Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 14. I want to read a section to you there.

Look at this. Jesus entered into our weeping. Look at Hebrews 2:14, "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is the Devil, and deliver all those through who the fear of death, who through the fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely, it's not angels that he helps but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore, he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."



Listen, it's faith in Jesus Christ, that is what makes for peace. That is what Jerusalem as a city, as its leadership rejected. But it's through faith in Jesus Christ that God delivers us from the wrath to come. And Jesus chose to enter into our weeping, and weep over sin along with us, and even to endure it, Isaiah 53:4, "Surely he has born our griefs and carried our sorrows." It says, "He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed," it's a reference back to Genesis 3:15, the promise of the gospel in Genesis, even in the midst of cursing, "he was crushed for our iniquities, upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed."

Look, Jesus has entered into our weeping that he might rescue us from our weeping. And that is the promise of the gospel which comes, and you can turn back to Luke 6, it comes in Luke 6:21, "Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh." And that promise forms our final point, that God himself will put an end to all of our weeping. God will put an end to all of our weeping. As I said, God did not create sin, or weeping, or pain, or suffering, but he did decree it. He didn't create it. But it was God's purpose in decreeing all that has happened, and

it was so he could bring all glory to himself by introducing Jesus Christ.

And Jesus Christ, he is the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end. God's plan was never for humanity to stay in the Garden of Eden. The failure of Adam was intended to make way for the last Adam, his one and only son, Jesus Christ. When Adam's righteousness was tested, it failed, didn't it? And if you'd been there, you would've failed too. So would I.

But Jesus is the one whose righteousness would be tested, time and time again, his righteousness would last all testing, His righteousness would fulfill all the law of God, and would triumph through the testing. His righteousness becomes our righteousness when we embrace him by faith. Jesus is the one who came to crush the serpent's head, to lead believing children of Abraham back to the Father, to be reconciled to the life-giving God.

The departure of Adam and Eve from God, it began with unbelief. The sin of unbelief led to the transgression of God's

command resulting in death and sorrow. And that is why our reconciliation with God starts with repenting of our unbelief and putting our faith in God. We left through a departure from believing in God, we reenter through believing in God. We trust God wholly. We believe in Jesus Christ, whom he sent to save us, and in Christ, we're reconciled to God, we're restored in relationship with God, in whom is no death or sorrow or weeping, but in whom is life eternal.

Now look at Luke 6:21 again. The fulfillment promise that Jesus gives us in the second half of the sentence, "Blessed are you who weep now," for what? "For you shall laugh." The word for laughter, it's the word *gelao*, and it refers to an external, outward expression of joy and happiness. There's a laughter, here, of relief and delight. Again, it's not just an inward smile, but it's something you can see, something that is visible and audible. It's laughter.

The outward expression of sorrow in the first part of the verse, our weeping, our crying, that's replaced by outward expressions of joy in our laughter. I'd like to call this, holy laughter, but for Rodney Howard Brown reasons I'll call it

righteous laughter or pious, godly laughter, okay? That's what we'll call it. I'd like to take back the term, holy laughter, though. I don't like it when heretics get good terms like that and rob them of all their meaning, so, holy laughter? Could we do that?

In the parallel text, in Matthew chapter 5 verse 4 the beatitude reads, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." The word for mourn there is different than what we see in Luke 6:21, it is the word *pentheo*. *Pentheo*. Which refers more to internal sadness and profound sorrow. So instead of laughter, the fulfillment promise in Matthew's beatitude is comfort. There's an internal aspect of Matthew 5:4, so there's an internal *pentheo*, a sorrow of internal sadness and mourning, and it's replaced, or overcome, by an internal comfort, the word *parakaleo*.

Now we've said before, Jesus said both things on this occasion. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted," that's applicable to everyone but it's targeted especially to his Jewish audience. The Jews would recognize a clear allusion, there, to Isaiah 61:2 of the Messiah who comes

to comfort all who mourn. Same language. Same wording. And that made that promise unambiguous to the Jews.

But Jesus also said on this occasion, "Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh," which is what Luke records. It's applicable to all, Jew and Gentile alike, but it's targeted to Jesus' Gentile audience. In fact, if you look at Luke 6:25 in our passage here, Jesus combines both the words *pentheo* and *klaio* in the woe and the warning to the rich. "Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn," *pentheo*, and weep, *klaio*.

And the contrast is so vivid. It's one that people could picture in their mind's eye as they listened to Jesus. Those who're characterized by regular crying and weeping now, their weeping will one day be replaced by laughing. Visible, audible, external, outward expressions of joy. By contrast, though, those who are characterized by regular laughing now, they'll one day, it'll one day be replaced by internal sorrow that will never depart, and an external crying, visible, audible weeping. For them, the party is over. An eternity of relentless judgement begins.

There is a, in a fundamentally spiritual nature, as we've said, to our hunger and our tears. The satisfaction and comfort that Jesus promises when the kingdom comes in glory, we need to understand that it's not only spiritual, it's not merely spiritual, as if we're somehow disembodied spirits that are satisfied and comfortable as we inhabit the, the ethereal, nothingless, spaceless, and bodiless existence, we can't think of it that way. We need to understand that this is physical, too. Literal laughing. There's a physical and spiritual element to this. Our actual, physical weeping will be replaced by actual, physical laughter.

And I want to show you a couple passages as we wrap up today that illustrate the promise of Christ, we see in Luke 6:21. This is the joy part, right? This is where we need to camp on, even as we weep now. This is what we read earlier from Psalm 126. There was an actual, literal experience of joy and laughter as the exiles returned to the land in Psalm 126. And that forms the basis for understanding other promises of restoration in the major prophets.

Turn to the end of Isaiah's prophecy, Isaiah 65:16-19. And while you're turning there, I'll just read a couple of others. This is a, here's a New Covenant promise in Jeremiah, Jeremiah 31:13. God said, "I will turn their mourning into joy. I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow." Isaiah also says, Isaiah 51:11, "And the ransom of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing. Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away." Those are interpreted as being fulfilled in the millennial kingdom, when Christ comes to ascend David's throne, to reign as king literally on this earth for a thousand years.

But listen to this promise in Isaiah 65:16-19: "The former troubles are forgotten and are hidden from my eyes. For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth. And the former things shall not be remembered, or, or, or come to mind, but be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create, for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy and her people to be a gladness. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people. No more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress."

Listen, when's that going to happen? Not during the millennial kingdom. New heavens, new earth, all my exegetical research tells me this is something new, right? There will not be only a future for Israel, fulfillment of restoration promises in an earthly, millennial kingdom, but also a future for all God's people who are in a new, eternal kingdom.

So, with that in mind, turn to the end of your bibles to Revelation chapter 20 and we'll wrap this up. This is so, so good. Revelation 20 verses 7 and 8 says, "When the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle. Their numbers are like the sand of the sea. They shall march up over the broad plain on the earth, surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city." What is that? More sadness and sorrow, right? After the millennial kingdom, more weeping, because the presence of sin and rebellion remains.

Look at verse 9, God is going to bring a full and final end to all of that. They'll march up, they'll surround the camp of the saints, the beloved city, but, "fire came down from heaven



and consumed them." Battle over. "The Devil, who had deceived them, was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were. And they'll be tormented day and night forever and ever. And then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away. No place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne.

"Books were opened. And another book was opened which is the Book of Life. The dead were judged by what was written in the books according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. And then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life he was thrown into the lake of fire." "Then I saw," Isaiah 65, right? "A new Heaven, and a new Earth. For the first Heaven and the first Earth had passed away, the sea was no more. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem coming down out of Heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God

is with man. He will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.'"

Now, look at this, "He will wipe every tear away from their eyes. Death shall be no more, neither shall they'll be, there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." I love that promise, don't you? Jesus said, "Blessed are those who weep now, for you shall laugh." And when we come to Revelation 21, we find out here that it's God himself who will personally wipe every tear of weeping, of crying, of sadness, of mourning, away from our eyes.

When the former things pass away, including sin and death, and all the attended mourning and crying and pain, all of that's not only gone, but it's replaced by rejoicing. There's the deep comfort for those who mourn now, Matthew 5:4, as well as the levity and the laughter for those who are now weeping, Luke 6:21. Beloved, that's us. We're going to stand one day at the brink of God's judgement and destruction and realize, hah! We've been rescued! Laughter will ensue, rejoicing as the battle is over, the victory is won, and there is no more pain, or crying, or mourning anymore.

For those who are, of us who are characterized by weeping and hungering now. Those who are the poor that Jesus describes here, listen, the more you know him, even though it makes your hungering and thirsting for him more acute, even though it makes your weeping more frequent, more sorrowful, more profound, because you see sin now the way God sees sin, you know what? You can be of good courage because your Lord has said, "Blessed are you, for you shall laugh." Believe him in that, and you'll be blessed.