

PRAYERS

Chris Bonen – Doctors will continue to monitor her.

Wetzler Family – Jay, Connie’s Cousin, passed away last week.

Congregation News:

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: If you drink before you drive, you are “putting the quart before the hearse!”

Those Privileged to Serve

Sunday Morning Service:

12/2/18

12/9/18

Bible Class	Colby Crawford	Colby Crawford
Announcements	Paul Darling	Colby Crawford
Song Leader	Paul Darling	Tom Bright
Opening Prayer	Colby Crawford	Colby Crawford
Lord's Supper	Colby Crawford	Tom Bright
Closing Prayer	Tom Bright	Paul Darling
Sermon	Tom Bright	Paul Darling

Bible Classes

Sunday Morning

Wednesday Evening

Adult	Colby Crawford	Tom Bright
Children	Colby Crawford	Linda McBrayer
Toddlers	Cindy Bright	
Babies	Anissa Crawford	

Birthdays & Anniversaries

December 1st – Carly Crawford
December 3rd – Patrick Rombs
December 7th – Clay Crawford

Building Cleanup

McBrayer

Aberdeen church of Christ

1801 S. Lincoln St.

Aberdeen, SD 57401

605-225-3621

www.aberdeenchurchofchrist.net

Bulletin Submissions

If you would like anything added to the bulletin such as prayer requests, news, or events, please make submissions by Friday night to: tlbj@sbcglobal.net

Aberdeen church of Christ

December 2, 2018

Blessed are They that Mourn

This is the second of nine wonderful beatitudes that came from the lips of our Lord. Like so many of the other beatitudes, this one seems to run contrary to the thinking of men, for who in their right mind would even suggest that one can be genuinely happy while at the same time mourning? The Greek is *'pentheo,'* and means “to mourn for, lament, to wail over, sorrow for some-thing.” The word for mourn is a form of the same word that describes mourning for the dead. It is bereavement, the utter grief and sorrow which accompanies the loss of someone dear. Trench remarks that the Greek word means to grieve with a grief which so takes possession of the whole being that it cannot be hid. The word is used to express the over whelming grief of Jacob when he believed the false report of Joseph’s death (LXX). There is no stronger word for mourning in the Greek language than *'pentheo.'* “What a generous and merciful arrangement of Almighty God that even life’s sorrows shall bless and reward his servants!” (Coffman). Oh yes, what a paradox! To the man attuned to the world this beatitude may seem ridiculous, a bit out of sorts with the thinking of his peers. If there is one thing the world agrees on it is this: sorrow should be avoided and mourning shunned. “Forget your troubles; drown your sorrows; forget reality!” The grief here is not a one-time grief, but it is a continuous mourning. “Blessed are the ones who keep on mourning.”

But to what kind of sorrow does this refer? What kind of sorrow must the child of God feel every single day? Should we take it literally and conclude that Jesus was saying, “Blessed is the man who has endured the most bitter sorrow that life can bring”? This kind of sorrow might compel others to have compassion on us thereby giving us the experience what it is like to be on the receiving end of the love and care of our fellow human beings. If this is the sorrow to which Jesus referred, then perhaps the words of the poet might take on a much richer meaning:

“I walked a mile with Pleasure, She chattered all the way,
But left me none the wiser, For all she had to say.
I walked a mile with Sorrow, And ne’er a word said she,
But, oh, the things I learned from her, When Sorrow walked with me!”

As important such mourning is, I do not think it is this kind of sorrow that Jesus had in mind. The sorrow of which Jesus speaks is the sorrow resulting from one's personal sins. Not only must the true servant of God feel bankrupt because of his sin ("poor in spirit"), but he must have sorrow as a result of it. Here is the soul who, feeling his spiritual poverty, laments that such sins have separated him from his God. The value of this "mourning" is the resultant change in life. Paul tells us that "Godly sorrow worketh repentance" (2 Cor. 7:10). In his book, *The Trial of Jesus*, Walter Chandler devotes a small section to the different means of Roman capital punishment. Never has so wicked a means of death been devised as that of death by crucifixion. The agony and pain that our Savior went through was of the greatest degree possible. The cause for that suffering? Our sins! Yours and mine. Because of His great love for us, He suffered on the cross. How does that make us feel about sin? Do we take it lightly? If so, then we need to learn the lesson of this beatitude. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are those who mourn for their own sins. Blessed are those who mourn because of the sorrow brought upon the whole human race because of sin. Yes, blessed are those who mourn.

Unfortunately, extremes tend to beget extremes. There is a need to manifest joy in our lives. We are to "rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil. 4:4). We are not suggesting that the child of God should not be among the most joyful, if not THE most joyful, in all the world. But every time we read this passage we are reminded that this quality of spiritual mourning is something that is rather rare in the church today. There are some who refuse to preach on anything that is "negative," or that might be perceived as "negative preaching." We have reacted to the "puritanism" of two centuries ago by putting on a mask of piety. Some seem to think that you cannot convert a world lost in sin unless we radiate brightness, joviality and pure optimism. When is the last time we shed tears over sin, any sin, all sin, and especially OUR sin? Eldred Stevens took a close look at the life of Jesus and wrote: "We have no record anywhere that He ever laughed. He was angry (John 2:13-17, Mark 3:5). He was hungry (Luke 4:2). He was thirsty (John 4:7). But there is no record that He laughed" (Eldred Stevens, *Sermon on the Mount*, page 21). Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be a "man of sorrows" (Isa. 53:2-5, 7). Jesus wept at the death of Lazarus (John 11:35), and He wept at the lost condition of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Matthew 23:35-36). I would caution, however, lest we draw the

conclusion that Jesus walked around with a somber look, never smiling, or expressing any sense of happiness whatsoever. Quite the contrary. The very fact that He drew men to Himself suggests that He manifested joy and happiness to the greatest degree possible. But never a man wept to the degree which our Lord wept. Truly the Son of Man struck the perfect balance between mourning and joy.

Now notice the blessing promised to those who so weep. "*They Shall Be Comforted*" (5:4b). "*Shall be comforted*" translates '*parakaleo*.' The noun form of this word appears in John 14:26 where Jesus promised the apostles the coming of the Comforter. The root word literally means, "a calling to one's side; hence, either an exhortation of consolation, encouragement" (W.E. Vine). The comfort promised here can only come through a study of, and compliance to, the gospel of Jesus Christ. "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon men; 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*" (Isaiah 61:1). In connection, notice Luke 4:18. Other sources of consolation do not reach the deep sorrows of the soul brought on by a realization of one's sins as that promised here. Some human solutions may temporarily blunt the spiritual senses, but they do not provide the true comfort promised by our Lord. Only through the realization of the hope given through the gospel can one be genuinely comforted. Those who mourn over their sins, who sorrow because they have committed sin, who are deeply touched because they have offended God, shall receive the comfort here promised. The wonderful invitation of our Lord to lost humanity touches on this very point: "*Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light*" (Matthew 11:28-30). It would seem that the immediate comfort comes when one obeys his Lord and receives the forgiveness of sins. The burden of sin is lifted at that point and soul enjoys the comforting realization that he now stands before God with continual access to the blood of Christ that keeps us clean as we walk in the light (1 John 1:6-8). But the ultimate comfort will come when we are ushered into heaven, where all tears will be wiped away, and we will rejoice with immeasurable joy for endless ages. Indeed, heaven will be worth it all.