

Blessings Part 3 Blessed Are You Who Weep

The Providential Hand of God and His intervention into the circumstances of our daily lives can often be wonderful. But it can also, at the same time be a fearsome thing. Wonderful when we have been praying for a special life-circumstance and God intervenes and makes things turn out the way we were hoping it would turn out. But fearsome when that matter needs a painful intervention, or even perhaps some form of discipline.

And God is clear in His word that all those many forms of daily circumstances taking place within this life are not odd or exceptions but are common to man. And again, some of those circumstances will be wonderful and pleasant, but some of them will surely be difficult, sometimes very difficult.

The Lord told us about some of those circumstances through the wisdom of Solomon in the Book of Ecclesiastes. Listen to these familiar words given there in chapter 3 where God tells us that

- ¹To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:
- ²A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
- ³A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;
- ⁴A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
- ⁵A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
- ⁶A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
- ⁷A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
- ⁸A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.
(Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

As Jesus began to teach and to preach, He would often tell the people about many of these same circumstances of life. Yes, He used different wording, and often used parables as His examples. But He was giving much the same

message as He had given earlier through the thoughts and the words and the wisdom of Solomon.

Here, in our passage for today, Jesus was teaching the people who were gathered to Him, telling them about the many circumstances of life that they would encounter, and that those circumstances would often appear to be difficult to them, but for them to take heart, that He could take even the most difficult of life circumstances and make them turn out good and for their blessing.

But within these words is also a strong warning to any who would ignore His teaching, saying to them that there would surely always be a consequence for every wrong behavior.

Listen to these words in Luke 6, beginning in verse 20.

²⁰Then He (the Lord Jesus) lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said:

“Blessed are you poor,

For yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹Blessed are you who hunger now,

For you shall be filled.

Blessed are you who weep now,

For you shall laugh.

²²Blessed are you when men hate you,

And when they exclude you,

And revile you, and cast out your name as evil,

For the Son of Man’s sake.

²³Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!

For indeed your reward is great in heaven,

For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

²⁴“But woe to you who are rich,

For you have received your consolation.

²⁵Woe to you who are full,

For you shall hunger.

Woe to you who laugh now,

For you shall mourn and weep.

²⁶Woe to you when all men speak well of you,

For so did their fathers to the false prophets. (Luke 6:20-26)

As you were listening to the words of this passage, were you able to recognize how some of these words of the Lord Jesus are so very similar to the words that I read a moment ago from the Book of Ecclesiastes? We need to always remember that Jesus is ever and always the "Word of God". That is why even though the words in the Book of Ecclesiastes were penned through the hands of King Solomon, they were given to Solomon by the Spirit of Christ as He filled Solomon's thoughts with wisdom. For that reason, it should not be surprising that the same truths would be expressed by the Lord Jesus Himself as He preached and taught His disciples and others who would gather to Him. Truth is truth and it remains the same throughout all of time.

In both of these passages of scripture, God is declaring to us that there surely will be a time and a season for everything under heaven. And that you and I should fully expect them and not be surprised by any and all of the many possibilities of this life, whether those things be good or evil, right or wrong, loving or hateful.

While not every one of those things mentioned in Ecclesiastes will touch each of us individually, many of them surely will, and most all of them will have at least some affect upon us.

Note especially there in the words of verse 4, of the Book of Ecclesiastes, God is telling us plainly that there surely will come times in our lives when we will weep and there will be times when we will laugh. There will be times when we will mourn, and times when we will dance.

And here, Jesus is saying it again, that yes, it is an inevitable fact of life that as we live and breathe and have our being on this earth, many things, both good and evil, right and wrong, difficult and pleasing will each take place in and around us every day.

And we can easily see it taking place as we look around us now. There are people who are very poor, and others who have plenty, people who are hungry, and others who have plenty to eat.

But here in the Book of Luke, Jesus takes us a step further, on beyond just acknowledging that these things will take place. Here, He tells us that there will also surely be a consequence for the manner in which we respond to these

things, that there will be blessings for those who respond rightly, and woes for those who respond wrongly.

And as I mentioned in another message, we must carefully take note that within these words Jesus is personalizing His blessings and His warnings. Using the words “you” and “yours”, He is intentionally addressing these truths to you and to me. He tells us,

- ²⁰ “Blessed are you poor,
For yours is the kingdom of God. (Luke 6:20)
²⁴ “But woe to you who are rich,
For you have received your consolation. (Luke 6:24)

And folks, we really must take heed to these truths! God is intending for you and me to take His words very personally. He is speaking directly to you and to me.

God is telling us here that in our finances, He truly does want to bless you and me personally and individually. And He truly will, especially if in our wealthy condition, we still remain “poor in spirit”, if we don’t value our money beyond its intended purpose, if we see money simply as a provision to enable us to carry on forward the plans and the purposes that God has for us.

And if we can keep that “right perspective”, then “blessed are we, for ours is the kingdom of God”.

Now, here in verses 21 and 25 of Luke chapter 6, Jesus is telling us that it is also much the same with our emotions. It is inevitable that as we live from day to day, you and I will have times and opportunities of both weeping and of laughing. We must not be surprised by it when it takes place, and we must be able to respond to both in a manner that will bless the Lord.

And again, let me state a fundamental truth that we have mentioned on several occasions recently. All of these things, whether right or wrong, good or evil, difficult or pleasurable, and no matter how secular a matter might appear on the surface, all that takes place is still inescapably spiritual, both in the manner that they are brought to us and in the manner that we are required to respond to them.

It is always God’s desire that we elevate every occurrence and every opportunity into the spiritual realm and that we deal with them there, from a

spiritual perspective. It is then and only then that righteousness will prevail and that we and others can be blessed.

Listen again to these words in Luke chapter 6.

²¹ . . . Blessed are you who weep now,
For you shall laugh.

²⁵ (But) . . . Woe to you who laugh now,
For you shall mourn and weep. (Luke 6:21,25)

With only a moment of thought, we know that we must first ask the question, "What is it that causes us to weep or to laugh?" Are we weeping or laughing for good and righteous reasons, or were we brought to those circumstances because of wrongs that we have done?

Scripture is clear, God has put into place a system of appropriate consequences that must always take place for the things that we do in the flesh. Our sins will find us out and we will reap what we sow. God is not blind to our habits and our behaviors. He loves us and He will lovingly let our misdeeds bring about suffering so that we will repent of them. And we should be glad for that.

Much more blessed are we when we weep for those people and those circumstances that God weeps for, the pain and anguish being suffered by the weak, the helpless and the poor, and especially the suffering endured by the saints throughout the world because of their faith in Christ.

The world, the flesh and the devil are powerful adversaries, and they are in and around each of us every day, plying their arts at making our lives miserable, providing us with every opportunity to weep, turning happy matters into sad ones.

They are able to ply their art especially well within the most common matters of our daily life, subtly and cleverly. What we might first perceive to be a new and perfect job, or a new and perfect house, or a new and perfect relationship can be filled with hidden miseries, and most assuredly within each there will be both weeping and laughing.

And Jesus is saying to us, "do not be overwhelmed as these things take place. I am always with you, and blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh."

But Jesus also takes this opportunity to warn us to be very careful about the things and the circumstances that we might get caught up in because,

²⁵ . . . Woe to you who laugh now,
for you shall mourn and weep. (Luke 6:25)

The tempter and his temptations are always present. Always! And here, Jesus is telling us that it is in those moments when we least expect the tempter's snare, that we must be careful to make right choices and right decisions, else our laughing will surely turn to mourning.

What are those right choices and right decisions? The answer to that question is a simple, but a difficult one. We are to continually live a "surrendered" life, surrendered to the knowledge and recognition and acceptance that God truly is sovereign, that He truly is providential in His intervention into all the matters of our daily life, that His plan and His purpose for each of the matters before us is ever and always at work, and that if we will simply join Him in what He is doing, we will be blessed beyond measure.

But that often is a "tall order", one that requires you and me to go beyond our normal, sometimes passive and detached, manner of Christian life that we live. But it is the only answer.

Each one of us here today is in a different stage of our life's journey, some just beginning, some in the middle, others nearing the end. But regardless of where we are in our journey, God still has a very intimate and personal plan for each of us, exactly where we should live, exactly where we should work, and exactly how we should conduct our daily life no matter what the circumstance.

How do we know that for sure? He told us so in the words of Acts 17. Listen carefully to these words that I have read to us often! I love these words! He tells us here that

²⁶From one man He (God) made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁷God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸'For in him we live and move and have our being.'
(Acts 17:26-27)

Folks, you should mark these verses in your bible and read them often. As born-again believers, you and I really do live and move and have our being in Christ. And He truly has determined the times set for us and the exact places where we shall live. And it is only right that we should ask Him first about all of the things we get involved in. If we do ask, and if we do follow His “still small voice”, and if we “trust in Him with all our hearts and lean not to our own understanding”, then we will have great happiness and laughter in our hearts. But if we fail to ask and if we choose for ourselves when and where we will live and move and have our being, then we cannot expect happiness and laughter to fill our hearts. And we should not be surprised when we find ourselves weeping and mourning.

If we choose our own bride or bridegroom to share our life, and we do not allow God that honor and privilege, then we must expect to receive only the rewards that this life will bring, and nothing more.

If we choose to buy a home because of its size or prestige or other fleshly attraction, then we must expect to receive only those rewards that the world will allow.

If we make our own choice of employment without seeking the guidance of God’s loving Spirit, then whatever we receive in that job will be our only reward, or lack of reward.

And within all these things there will surely be either weeping or laughing.

One last consideration of these words before we close . . . The context within which Jesus sets these “beatitudes” is one that bespeaks the probability that there will be times when we will have no real choice in our weeping and in our laughing. Listen, in verse 21,

²¹ . . . Blessed *are you* who weep now,
For you shall laugh. (Luke 6:21)

In Psalm 30, we are told to

⁴ Sing praise to the Lord, you saints of His,
And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.
⁵ For His anger *is but for a moment*,
His favor is for life;
Weeping may endure for a night,
But joy comes in the morning. (Psalm 30:4-5)

Whether we took a wrong turn in life and brought about our own weeping or, whether someone else or some circumstance beyond our control brought it about, if we will turn our hearts to the Lord and pursue His righteousness in our circumstances, His promise to us is still a blessed one.

The answer will ever and always be to “surrender”, to give up “our claim to our right to ourselves” and to allow God to complete His plan and His purpose in us. And yes, even then, there will still be times of weeping, but remember these words from Psalm 30.

Weeping may endure for a night,
But joy comes in the morning. (Psalm 30:5)

As we close, may I also remind us of that beloved promise that God gives to us in Romans 8:28. There, He tells us that as we love Him, and as we trust Him, and as we remain called according to His purposes for us, then He will surely work all the things that take place in our lives together for our good.

Praise be to the Lord! Let's pray.