

## GOOD MOURNING!

Not many think that mourning is a good thing. We mourn when we lose a loved one, and rightly so. We mourn when we lose something valuable, which is understandable. We even mourn when we think of opportunities lost (remember that great deal you missed or that ball that you dropped?). None of these things are considered good. But Jesus said, "*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*" (Matthew 5:4). What does he mean? How are we blessed (or happy) when we mourn?

While I certainly believe that there is a great deal of comfort in mourning the loss of a loved one who is a Christian, I do not believe that is what Jesus is referring to here. Jesus is referring to a type of mourning that is not very common. It is something that many people never even consider. Jesus is referring to mourning over our own sins! Yes, mourning over our own sins. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 7:10, "*For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.*" How often do you truly mourn over your sins?

Sometimes I think that we have become too casual in our efforts to avoid sin. We know, after all, that God will forgive us of our sins if we but ask (1 Jn 1:9). We know that God will always take us back if we stray. The result can be a nonchalant attitude when it comes to sin and a general lack of concern when we sin ourselves. We pray a prayer of forgiveness and move on. But Jesus says we must mourn!

Consider how you felt when you lost a loved one, especially someone who died "before their time". When my two year old niece was diagnosed with cancer and subsequently died from it, I was torn up inside. It still hurts to think about it. But when my grandfather died, I was sad, but also relieved. He was old, and sick, and ready to go on to his reward. Do you see the difference? We need to feel torn up inside when we sin. We need to feel horrible when others sin. Only then will repentance really mean something. Paul says it is "godly sorrow". Do you feel it?

Only when we feel the sorrow and mourn the fact that we sinned will we truly be able to appreciate the gift that God has given us. Only when sin hurts can we truly understand the blessing. Only when we understand that we have escaped the "wages of sin" (Romans 6:23) can we be comforted to know that God has saved us from our sins. Think about it!

**MJW**