

Devotional 2: Those Who Mourn

Repentance

Foundational Text

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

— Matthew 5:4

What the Text Reveals

The Greek *penthouentes* is the strongest word for grief in the New Testament—the mourning of bereavement, the wailing over the dead. Jesus does not use a softer word for sadness or disappointment. He reaches for the most visceral, gut-wrenching grief available in human language and declares that those who experience it are blessed.

But mourning over what? The context following the first beatitude clarifies: those who have recognized their spiritual bankruptcy (poor in spirit) now grieve over the condition that produced it. This is mourning over sin—not merely its consequences, but its offense against a holy and loving God. It is relational grief, not transactional regret.

The promise is equally forceful: “they will be comforted.” The passive voice indicates divine action—God Himself does the comforting. The Greek *paraklethesontai* shares the root of *parakletos*, the title Jesus gives the Holy Spirit in John 14:16. The Comforter comes to those who mourn. Comfort is not the absence of grief but the presence of God in the midst of it.

Biblical Architecture

2 Corinthians 7:10 provides the essential distinction: “Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.” Two kinds of mourning exist. Worldly sorrow grieves getting caught, losing reputation, or suffering consequences. Godly sorrow grieves the offense against God Himself—the wound inflicted on the relationship, the breach in intimacy, the dishonoring of the One who loved us first.

Joel 2:12–13 captures the divine invitation: “Return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments.” God distinguishes between outward religious performance (torn garments) and inward relational brokenness (torn hearts). He is not interested in the theater of repentance but in the reality of restored intimacy.

James 4:8–10 issues the stunning command: “Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.”

James connects mourning directly to lifting—the same pattern as the beatitude. The descent into grief becomes the ascent into God’s restorative presence.

Anne Graham Lotz’s “Blindspots of Sin” examination fits precisely here. Mourning requires seeing sin as God sees it—not the sanitized version we present to ourselves, but the full reality of what our rebellion costs the heart of a loving Father. Blindspots persist where mourning is superficial. Deep mourning exposes what comfortable self-assessment conceals.

Core Thesis

True repentance produces godly grief—not shame-based performance or transactional apology, but brokenhearted sorrow over sin’s offense against a holy, loving God. Revival flows through tears of genuine repentance, not religious activity that bypasses the heart. The distinction between relationship-based and shame-based repentance is the difference between revival and reformation.

Revival Connection: Week 2 — No Revival Without Repentance

Week 2 of Revival 2026 builds entirely on this beatitude. The curriculum’s crucial distinction between relationship-based and shame-based repentance mirrors the text’s distinction between godly and worldly sorrow. Shame says, “I am a failure.” Repentance says, “I have wounded the One I love.” Shame drives us from God. Repentance drives us to Him.

The historical pattern confirms that every genuine revival features public and private mourning over sin. During the Welsh Revival, miners wept openly over their profanity. During the East African Revival, confessions of hidden sin became the gateway to restored fellowship. During the Azusa Street Revival, racial and denominational walls fell as believers mourned their pride and prejudice.

Repentance that restores intimacy rather than merely modifying behavior is the engine of sustained revival. Without mourning, there is no comfort. Without godly sorrow, there is no transformation. The second beatitude is the second step in the revival progression: after recognizing our bankruptcy, we grieve over what created it.

Strategic Question

Is my repentance driven by fear of consequences or grief over wounding my Father? Am I mourning what God mourns, or only what inconveniences me?

Closing Prayer

Father, give us hearts that mourn over sin—not because we are caught, but because we have wounded You. Let us grieve what grieves You. Break through our rationalizations and excuses.

Bring us to the end of ourselves so You can bring us back to the beginning of intimacy with You. Comfort us with Your presence as we repent. Send Your Spirit—the Comforter—to meet us in our mourning and lead us into the joy of restored relationship. Amen.

Scripture Treasury

“Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.”

— **2 Corinthians 7:10**

“Return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.”

— **Joel 2:12–13**

“Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.”

— **James 4:9–10**

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”

— **Psalms 51:17**

“Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.”

— **Psalms 32:1**