

# Mourning: 4 Doors to Finding God

## Signpost #2

Matthew 5:4; April 27, 2014

Living in this world is not easy. In spite of the many joys of this world, we are beset by a number of disappointments, trials, pains from the sins of others and from our own, and times of suffering. Each of these provides surprising opportunities to discover God.

This week we'll look at four kinds of mourning and how each of them provide us unexpected doorways to finding God and deepening our relationship with Him.

### **DAY 1: Mourning #1: mourning over loss**

*Matthew 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.*

3. The first kind of mourning is sadness over loss.

*Eccles. 3:4 ...a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance...*

4. When you go through times of loss you'll sometimes hear well-meaning people say things like, "You need to move on from your grief." What would Solomon, in Ecclesiastes 3:4, have to say about that?

5. If you have ever lost a loved one, there are times where you grieve over your loss, and other times where you learn to praise God through your loss. What is the effect on you when someone says to you, "You should stop grieving and start praising God"?

*2 Cor. 6:10 ... sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.*

6. Notice Paul's perspective on sorrow and rejoicing. It's not *either* sorrow *or* rejoicing. It's both. And both don't have to be done simultaneously. There will be times of sorrow and times of rejoicing. What strikes you about Paul's teaching?

7. The psalmist experienced the loss of homeland, place of worship and the sting of enemies.

*Psalms 42:5 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help<sup>6</sup> and my God. My soul is cast down within me, therefore I remember thee from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.*

8. How does the psalmist deal with his mourning? How does his grief drive him to God?

## DAY 2: Mourning #2: mourning when people disappoint you

1. There is a second type of mourning: when people disappoint you.
2. There are generally two types of responses to when people disappoint us.
  - a. Anger (irritation, frustration, annoyance, etc.).
  - b. Sadness or disappointment.
3. What do you think makes the difference between whether we respond with anger or sadness?

4. With some people we **expect** them to meet our needs. With others, we **hope** they will, but we aren't "banking" on it. What this means is simply this. Whether or not you get mad has to do with either your *expectation* or just your *desire*. It has nothing to do with the people! What strikes you about this?

5. Below, are a set of verses that warn us about setting our hopes in what "man" (people) can do for us. Under each verse, jot down at least one thought from it.

*Proverbs 29:25 Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.*

*Psalms 118:9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.*

*Isaiah 2:22 Stop trusting in man, who has but a breath in his nostrils. Of what account is he?*

*Jeremiah 17:5 This is what the LORD says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD."*

6. There is nothing wrong with **desiring** people to treat you well. But when our real **hope** (**expectation**) is that someone will treat us well, we set ourselves up for anger inside, and conflict outside. Without being aware of it, at that moment, our "heart has turned away from the Lord."

7. What is the silver lining when people disappoint us?

### DAY 3: Mourning #3: mourning over our "failure"

1. The third type of "mourning" is driven by perceived failure. Check any of the examples below that you have experienced:

\_\_\_ Feelings of self-pity

\_\_\_ Feelings of depression

\_\_\_ "How could I have been so stupid? I knew better!"

*2 Cor. 7:10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.*

2. Paul identifies two kinds of "sorrow." What are they?

3. Which kind of sorrow would Paul say "mourning #3" is, godly sorrow or worldly sorrow?

4. After Judas betrayed Jesus, he suddenly saw with horror what he had done.

*Matthew 27:3 When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders.*

<sup>4</sup> *"I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood." "What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility."*

<sup>5</sup> *So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.*

5. Which type of sorrow would Paul say Judas had, godly sorrow or worldly sorrow? What makes you think so?

6. In the verse below, underline three distinctives of godly sorrow:

*2 Cor. 7:10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.*

7. Next to each distinctive of godly sorrow, jot down what you think Paul means:

Godly sorrow...

a. "brings repentance" -

b. "leads to salvation" -

c. "leaves no regret" -

8. Many, many times I have experience "mourning #3" thinking it was repentance when in fact it was more of wounded pride, a sense of failure or embarrassment. What should I have done, instead?

## **DAY 4: Mourning #4: repentance**

*2 Cor. 7:10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.*

1. Today we'll look at an example of godly sorrow, "Mourning #4." This is from Peter's denial of Jesus.

*Luke 22:59 About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean."*

<sup>60</sup> *Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed.*

<sup>61</sup> *The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times."*

<sup>62</sup> *And he went outside and wept bitterly.*

2. Just from this passage, can we tell if Peter had either worldly sorrow or godly sorrow?

3. Let's fast forward in Peter's life about two months. Jerusalem is full of Jews who have traveled from all the surrounding lands. The Holy Spirit moves Peter to preach the first Christian sermon. Here are two excerpts.

*Acts 2:14 Then **Peter** stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.*

<sup>15</sup> *These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!*

<sup>16</sup> *No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:*

<sup>17</sup> *"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.*

*Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."*

<sup>37</sup> *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"*

<sup>38</sup> *Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

<sup>39</sup> *The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call."*

4. Can we now tell if Peter experienced worldly sorrow or godly sorrow? How?

5. Have you had a recent example of godly sorrow in your life?

## **DAY 5: Mourning leads to comfort!**

1. Though we live in a fallen world where evil and suffering are a part of life, our redemptive God uses these trials to draw us to Himself. It can be argued that NO ONE would seek God on their own apart from trials. The silver lining is that in no other way will we discover the treasure that God is to be to us!

2. Let's look at the kind of comfort God meets us with in each of these kinds of "mourning." For each of the four kinds of mourning, jot down your thoughts from each verse on God's comfort.

**a. Mourning #1: mourning over loss.**

*Psalms 34:18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.*

*Psalms 147:3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.*

**b. Mourning #2: mourning when people disappoint you.**

*Isaiah 51:12 "I, even I, am he who comforts you. Who are you that you fear mortal men, the sons of men, who are but grass,"*

**c. Mourning #3: mourning over perceived failure.**

*Psalms 30:5 For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.*

**d. Mourning #4: mourning over personal sin: repentance.**

*Isaiah 52:9 Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.*

3. What strikes you about God's comfort, from today's study?

4. One final word. Sometimes, God's way of comforting is through you! Read:

*Romans 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep.*