

ACTNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Cell Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Cell Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

Blessed are those who Mourn

Matthew 5:4

Rev Reuben Ng

SERMON SYNOPSIS

- When we encounter the things Jesus said and did, we tend to focus on a “merely important” aspect, but miss what is of greatest importance. For example, when Jesus delivered two demon-possessed men in Matthew 8:28-34, the people were more focused on the loss of the herd of pigs than on the deliverance of the two men. Similarly in Matthew 9:1-6, the Pharisees and teachers of the law were more focused on Jesus’ apparent blasphemy than on how a formerly paralysed man walked away with his sins forgiven. Looking at Matthew 5:4, we should not miss what is of greatest importance here, the comfort of God that comes to those who mourn.
- We tend to fall into two unhelpful extremes when dealing with mourning. Some say a “true believer” would never have to mourn because the Christian life is always joyful, blessed and blissful. The other extreme says it is okay to allow our negative emotions to take over and remain in sorrow for a prolonged period. Both of these extremes are not biblically sound and can cause more harm than good to those who are mourning.
- The verb “to mourn” is a common verb in biblical Greek and cannot be confined to the idea of mourning for sin. According to biblical scholar Robert A. Guelich, it can be described as “an inclusive grief that refers to the disenfranchised, contrite, and bereaved. It is an expression of the intense sense of loss, helplessness and despair.”
- The comfort of God that comes to those who mourn is promised in Isaiah 61:1-3. These verses were written when the people of God were in exile, away from their Promised Land and mourning because they were experiencing evil, injustice, tragedy and death. The fulfilment of the words of Isaiah are in Jesus. The comfort that we have in Jesus is a “binding” of the broken hearted (similar to the binding of a broken bone which gives it strength but does not yet bring about full healing). However we will receive the fullness of comfort on the Day of the Lord – His glorious presence where every tear will be wiped away.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you or those around you had reason to mourn recently? What happened? How was the grief handled by you or those who were mourning?

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2. How can we remain blessed and comforted even in the midst of the mourning we experience or see in our world today?

[Verses to help us go deeper: 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Habakkuk 3:17-19; Psalm 34:18]

3. Once we receive comfort from God, how do we respond to the mourning and affliction of others?

[Verses to help us go deeper: Galatians 6:2; Matthew 25:34-40; James 1:27]

PRAYER POINTERS

- Thank God that He is the God of all comfort, who comforts us in our afflictions.
- Pray for the strength to remain steadfast in gracious hope when circumstances are difficult.
- Pray for those who are afflicted and mourning because of the difficulties they face; whether they are those you know personally or those far away. Pray for God's comfort upon them.

MEMORY VERSE

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. [Psalm 34:18, ESV]

PRACTICAL HANDLE

Discuss as a CG how you can participate in bringing comfort to others, either via the OSC-MWS programmes, home visitations to elderly members of the church, or others means.