

BLESSED ARE THEY WHO MOURN

Mt 5:4

I. GODLY SORROW (II Cor 7:10; cf. Ps 51:1-17)

A. Conviction

1. Conscience-stricken, inner awareness
 - a. Paul on Damascus Road
 - b. Augustine re pears stolen
 - c. Abigail Favale, *The Genesis of Gender*
2. Knowledge clear, misdeeds demonstrable
 - a. David after Nathan's rebuke
 - b. Bernard Nathanson—"Silent Scream," *Aborting America; The Hand of God*
 - c. Jim Bakker: *I Was Wrong*
3. More than feeling bad when apprehended

B. Contrition

1. Sincere remorse, broken-hearted
2. Bella Dodd after renouncing Communism, hungers for penance
3. Weeping a physical manifestation of inner admission

C. Confession (Ro 10:9-11)

1. Acknowledging need of Divine (grace), give "confession of faith"
2. Importance of "confessing with mouth" & aural confession—going to altar value

D. Conversion/Repentance (*metanoia*) essential: turning around—Mt 4:17; Mt 3:8; Acts 3:18-19

1. Right Turn, pivotal decision, evident in Scripture
 - a. Noah (Gn 6-8)
 - b. Prodigal Son (Lk 15)
 - c. Lost Sheep (Lk 15)
 - d. Peter's denial, subsequent return (Lk 22:61)
2. Right Turns in history
 - a. Chuck Colton's *Born Again* & "Prison Fellowship"
 - b. John Bruchalski, *Two Patients: My Conversion from Abortion to Life-Affirming Medicine*
 - c. Abigail Favale, *Into the Deep*

II. NATURAL/HUMAN SORROW

A. Verifying biblical texts—N.B. "seven penitential psalms," many psalms of "lament"

1. Ps 30:5—"weeping may endure for a night"
2. Ps 116:3-4—"the pains of death surrounded me"
3. Ps 126:5-6—"sow in tears shall reap in joy"
4. Jas 1:2—"count it all joy"
5. Rom 5:3—"glory in tribulations"
6. Col 1:3-4—"rejoice in my sufferings . . . and fill up in my flesh what is lacking"

B. Verifying written resources

1. Leibniz, *Theodicy*
2. C.S. Lewis: *The Problem of Pain* and *A Grief Observed*
3. Sheldon Vanaukan: *A Severe Mercy*

III. COMFORT COMES

A. Spirit-strengthened, supernatural, sustained, buoyed up by heavenly hope

B. Time-tempered, ultimate resiliency

C. Persuasive testimonies within "communion of saints"—God is Good despite disappointments

1. Martin Gray: *For Those I Loved*
2. Eddie Jaku: *The Happiest Man on Earth: The Beautiful Life of an Auschwitz Survivor*
3. Joni Eareckson Tada: *Joni*