

# Comfort for the Mourning Heart

Let's pray again. Father, we thank you for this reminder of Your goodness. And one of the signs of Your goodness is that You've given us Your Word. You didn't leave us on our own and You'd give us Your Spirit to understand Your word. Lord, I pray that as we open Your Scriptures, the Bible, I pray that You would speak to our hearts and Lord, comfort the hearts that need comfort, convict the hearts that need to be convicted and in all make us more like Jesus. We pray this in Jesus name and all God's thankful people said Amen. Amen.

If you have a Bible, would you mind opening with me in Matthew chapter five? Matthew chapter five.

And if you don't have a Bible, there should be a Bible in the back chair in front of you. And if you don't own a Bible, I want to encourage you to make that Bible your own if you want to. If not, we have some Bibles at the Welcome Center and we love for you to make that your own Bible. As long as you read it, you can have it on as a gift from us.

As I was preparing for this message, I came across this illustration that I thought I should share with you because I think it might lead well into what we're going to talk about.

Chuck Colson was a renowned Christian leader in the 80s and 90s. And probably some of you have heard this name. He was connected with the Watergate scandal under President Nixon. And he was put in prison. And then in prison he became a Christian and then came out and started the ministry Prison Fellowship Ministries and wrote some books. But at one point he shares that he was watching a TV show called 60 Minutes, probably you're familiar with that, in which the host was interviewing an Auschwitz survivor by the name of Yahiel Dinur. And this guy, he was the main witness of the Nuremberg trials in the 50s and 60s. Actually 61. Specifically in this one specific trial of Adolf Eichmann.

If you don't know anything about Nuremberg trials, once the Second World War was done, Hitler and his or excuse me, the comrades of Hitler, the ones who were his people in charge, were all gathered together and they were prosecuted. And it was a worldwide tribunal. It was all held in Nuremberg, but it was a worldwide event.

And this specific situation happened in 1961 with Adolf Eichmann. Eichmann was probably the right hand of Hitler. He was under prosecution. And Dinur, this guy, the Hebrew guy, Jewish guy, who was actually a survivor of the Holocaust, was brought in as being a witness on the trial. So later on, they're interviewing 60 Minutes, interviewing this guy, but there is this clip that you can actually find on YouTube where Adolf Eichmann is in this box, an accusation box. And Yahiel Dinur comes in, this Jewish guy who survived the Holocaust sits down and he gets the mic and he starts talking and. And then he looks at Eichmann and all of a sudden passes out. And they're all, like, shocked. What happened with this guy? So years later, they're all wondering, is it because of fear? Is it all this emotion that came from all the things, that trauma that he had in the prison camp and concentration camp? So there are all these questions.

So years later, he's on 60 Minutes, and the host asks him, what were you thinking? What are you feeling? Why did you pass out? Is it any of these things? And he says, actually, no. Listen

to what he says. Rather, this guy says, "I realized that Eichmann was not the godlike army officer who had sent so many to their deaths. This Eichmann was an ordinary man. And this guy goes on to say, I was afraid about myself. I saw that I might be capable to do this as well. I'm exactly like he. I thought for a moment if maybe given the circumstance." Think about that.

The host of 60 Minutes continued and summarized the New Year's statement by stating that, quote, "Eichmann is in all of us." Now, this is a horrifying statement to make, but I think it captures the central truth about man's nature.

Since the fall, since sin has been inhabiting in all of us. Actually, Jeremiah 17:9 says, Our hearts are deceitful and desperately wicked. And this is why this guy, Dinur, is like man if that guy was capable of this, probably I could be capable of this, given the circumstances.

Colson follows this illustration with this penetrating question. He asks, why is it that today sin is so seldom written or preached about? And the answer is in the nearest dramatic collapse. To truly confront the sin within us is a devastating experience. People don't want that. They don't want to hear about that.

But you cannot understand salvation. You cannot actually appreciate salvation in God's grace if you don't talk about sin and if you don't mourn about sin. So that's going to be the connection today. And I'm going to get to it a second more to see what's more about this idea of understanding our sin.

But just to give a little bit of a big picture here in the last few weeks, and I see some of you are new here. We've been going through the Sermon on the Mount. This is Matthew 5, and just a few things about that, because this is important. There was 400 years of silence between the last book of the Old Testament, the book of Malachi and the coming of Christ. 400 years in which God does not have any prophetic word. Years of silence.

And then Jesus comes about. Of course you can say John the Baptist who prepares His way. But John the Baptist messages same as Jesus. And Jesus says, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is near." That's the words of His mouth.

But then the first words out of His first sermon that is recorded by Matthew for us is about happiness. It's about how God's kingdom is about to bring something that you never experienced. He wants to say God's kingdom has His main characteristic, interesting enough, joy, happiness. And He starts with the words blessed. And there's like eight things. Blessed are this guy, blessed are this guy. So they're all connected. It's all about the same person. It's the person who is the kingdom of God. If you want to be known about, or excuse me, if you want to know about God's kingdom, if you want to know what's the characteristic of God's kingdom is happiness, blessedness, joyfulness.

And I talked with you about the fact that unfortunately in English the word happiness does not actually represent what God intends here. Because in English the word happiness comes from the root word hap, which means chance, circumstantial. And the world around us sees happiness as circumstantial based on chance. But here the word in original has something more deeper to tell us.

And I don't think that the word blessed does justice because blessed is a little bit more Christianese. It makes you feel like there's only this privileges approved by God, but it doesn't give you the feeling, the emotions you feel when you're in God's kingdom.

So I pointed out that biblical happiness or joy that Jesus talks about is this inward contentness that is not affected by circumstances. A joy, excuse me, which is completely independent of all the circumstances of life. And this starts, by the way, with a realization that we are spiritually bankrupt. Spiritual bankrupt.

By the way, I want to tell you why. Why happiness and why joy? Because God is a God of joy of God and happiness. He invented it and He wants us to experience it. Just so interesting.

It's so different than any other religion out there because a lot of the religions are about regulations and what the scripture says. No, God is about being or being in a state of happiness, of deep joy that is coming only if you're in the right relationship with God. And from that position you will obey and abide in Him once you experience Him.

But again, it starts with this realization that we're spiritually bankrupt. That's what it says. The first blessedness is the first. The first Beatitude is blessed or happy are the poor in spirit. It starts with this awareness that there's nothing in us that will make us right with God or that would give us any right standing with Him.

The poor in spirit see themselves as spiritually needy, as morally unworthy. And that flies right in the face of what we think religion should do.

People in Jesus' time, they thought that they are right with God because of their works. There are people nowadays that they think, if there's a God, then probably, and there's a heaven, then probably He would allow me in heaven, because here's the good things I'm doing. Here's where I think I'm better than others. So if I had to kind of quantify my life, I think I'm better off with good things and bad things.

While Jesus starts with saying, no, no, no, that's actually a wrong way to look at it. You need to first realize that there's zero on your balance here. There's nothing. All the good things you're doing because they are infected by sin, that means nothing. And unless you're perfect, you'll never be in God's presence.

So that's why it starts with being poor in the spirit and then it goes into mourning for sinners. It's actually hand in hand, and that's the way we pick it up today. We're going to tackle the second Beatitude. So if you have a Bible, just follow along. If not, we have here on the screen the words for you.

Matthew, chapter 5, verses 1 to 4. "Seeing the crowds, He", meaning Jesus, "went up on the mountain. And when He sat down, His disciples came to Him and He opened His mouth and taught them, saying, blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Now, what does that mean? Blessed are those who mourn. First, let me say what it doesn't mean. It might be helpful. It doesn't mean blessed are the grim, cheerless Christians. It doesn't mean that. Some believers apparently interpret this verse this way. They feel that they need to have a grim disposition all the time, because somehow God appreciates B=being more grim than being joyful.

Charles Spurgeon, a very known 19th-century preacher, says that some preachers he had known appeared to have their neckties twisted around their souls. Pretty hard.

Another famous preacher pointed out, ironically, that some guys go home on Sunday after church and they get sad because they left church without feeling depressed. I'm too happy, too joyful.

And some of you who, especially if you grew up in the Western hemisphere, you don't probably understand the fullness of this. But I'm telling you, as someone who grew up in a Russian culture or Romanian or Eastern European, we don't smile. It's not. Especially Christians. Like, if you see our family pictures from when we were young until this, we don't say cheese. We say grim. Grim.

And in church it's the same thing. Like we don't ever say joke. I actually remember being in seminary. You never joke. You never make people laugh. Are you crazy? Grim. Cheerless. That's what it is.

It's so anti the Bible. God invented joy. And He wants us to be joyful, not trite, not trivial. But He wants you to enjoy life as God designed it to be.

I had people accusing us at Trinity, that we are too full of grace. We need to bring a little bit more the law and the whip on you. I'm like, I'm sorry, we cannot going to do that. Like, I understand what you're saying, that we were trying to maintain a good balance between not only speaking about God's grace but there's also like the commandments. But I think if you preach rightly, God's grace, people understand that there's not a license for sin, but that's a love for Christ.

Also, it doesn't mean mourning for things that don't go your way. Don't go your way.

For example, one of David's son by the name of Amnon, he mourned because he couldn't have what he wanted. It was an incestuous relationship. I won't go into details, but there's still kids here. But he was mourning for something that he shouldn't and couldn't have.

There's another story about King Ahab, the king of Israel, who had all Israel at his disposal. But there was one of his subjects by the name of Naboth, just a simple guy who had a vineyard. He didn't want to sell it to the king. And Ahab went home and started mourning and crying. I cannot have that.

That's not a biblical mourning. And if you have kids at home, you know what I'm talking about. Have you ever seen kids that cried out of frustration? They couldn't get what they need? And here's the problem with that. Sometimes we think that as we tend to come alongside them, like, oh, it's okay. No, he needs a spanking, doesn't need a comfort. That's what those people need. They need discipline at that point in time, they don't need comfort.

Sometimes in Thessalonians, it says comfort the heartbroken and exhort the slothful, but don't do the opposite. Comfort the slothful and exhort the heartbroken. Same happens here. Like there's times where there's bad morning that's not a good morning, it needs discipline.

Okay then, Andre, what is the biblical type of mourning? What is specifically here in this text? What is God calling us to? I think primarily here in this text, mourning refers to mourning over sin. Mourning over sin. It means to mourn over our sin, our disobedience against God.

As someone pointed out, the first beatitude or blessed attitude, are the poor in spirit. Blessed are the poor in spirit. And this is a primarily an intellectual thing in the sense that you have to understand intellectually that you don't have anything to bring on the table.

But then the immediate count, or excuse me, a complement to that, is the second beatitude that brings emotions into it. Mourn over your sins. So when you realize that you don't have anything to bring because God is so holy and so perfect, the immediate reaction from that mental acknowledgment is this mourning and realization of your emotions, of your sins. That's why it's complementing each other. They're complementing each other.

Both the Gospel of Mark and Matthew point out the very first words of the message of Jesus was repent because the kingdom of God is near. But people cannot repent unless they understand what sin is. And just in case you don't know what sin is, let me just give you a very simple definition. Sin is defined as any act of disobedience against God's will and God's law. Disobeying His commandments.

Let me give you examples. Lying, stealing, cheating, blaspheming, being sexually immoral, being selfish, unkind, drunkard, disobedient to parents, and on and on it goes. You probably know if you have to, you never heard the Bible ever in your life. And I had to ask you, hey, what do you think sin is? You probably can give me some examples of that. Well, you know why? Because it's in our being. God created us with a moral referee. Regardless of the culture you grew up, regardless of the country you grew up, you know that cheating is wrong. You know that lying is wrong. Because that's a moral referee. So we are sinners by nature and by choice. As we grow older, we understand more what is right than wrong. And we choose, but also by nature. We do them as we're growing up. Since a little child. Nobody has to teach you how to lie, how to steal. You do them naturally.

And in case you wonder what's God's view on sin? How does he see you and me in our sin? Listen to what? The verses. I'm just gonna pick some verses here. The Bible is filled with this type of verses. Romans 6:23. "For the wages", the compensation "of sin is death." It's interesting, it doesn't say the wages of sins, plural, just 1.

Isaiah 59:2. "But your iniquities have separated you from your God. Your sins have hidden His face from you so that He will not hear." He does hear, of course, but he doesn't respond to our pleas. We are separated from God when we sin. Rightly so. Think about it. If God is God, he's the perfect God, holy, pure. How can He stay in the presence of impurity?

Ezekiel 18:20. "The soul who sins shall die." First Thessalonians, chapter 1, verse 9. "They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might." Sin brings death, physical death, and then spiritual death. Separation from God in eternity.

More than anything, if we want to see the consequences of our sins, we should look at the cross of Jesus Christ. We have a resemblance here. As we look at the cross, we're bound to say that is what sin can do. Sin can take the loveliest of lives in all the world and smash it on the cross.

One of the great functions of the cross is to open the eyes of men and women to the horror of sin. If you ever wonder how sinful we are, this is why Christianity is so beautiful. Because God says, you are such a sinner. Your sin is so grievous in My mind and heart, in My face, there's nothing that can actually redeem you. There's nothing you can compensate for your sin. Your sin is so atrocious in my eyes that only a divine being can pay for your sin.

This is why in Christianity we have this very clear teaching that God sent His only begotten Son, who was from the same substance with God, had to be. Had to be eternal. Because it was an eternal offense. And Jesus came and lived that life that you and I cannot live. Perfect life, inwardly, outwardly, and died on the cross to pay for the penalty of my sin. And your sin. He took your penalty, my penalty, on His shoulders. And the Bible says that He resurrected the third day to prove that He is who He says He is. And now He sits at the right hand of the Father, waiting for full restoration.

Christianity begins with a deep sense of sin and a sincere Biblical repentance of it. And I say sincere biblical repentance because some people think that just being sorrowful over your sin, that's enough. Actually, the Bible talks about godly sorrow and worldly sorrow.

Let me read to you the words of Paul in 2nd Corinthians 7. Paul says, "For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience produces a repentance that leads to salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow which lacks repentance results in spiritual death. Just see what this godly sorrow produced in you. Such earnestness, such concern to clear yourselves, such indignation, such alarm, such longing to see me, such zeal and such a readiness to punish wrong. You show that you have done everything necessary to make things right."

So biblical Godly sorrow is one that is earnest, that produces this deep remorse and grief over what we have done. We're not sorry that we're caught, but we're sorry and remorseful of what we have done, want to take full responsibility for our sins without blaming others or our circumstances for our sins.

Similar to King David in Psalm 51, we cry out to God with a deep anguish for forgiveness. There's no caveats, there's no excuses, there's no buts.

And by the way, in the life of a pastor, you have to counsel a lot of people who are either caught in sin or they come out with sins that they deal with. And it's very hard sometimes to figure out, is it earnest repentance or is just worldly sorrow?

And one of the ways you can figure it out if this is truly repentful, a repentful person is if they are truly broken. First of all, are they fully taking responsibility for what they've done without trying to. But, you know, if it wasn't for...no man, just own it, own it all. And then are you eager to do the right thing? Are you eager to say, I do whatever it takes? No more defenses, no more me trying to fix it? I'll do whatever it takes? What do you want me to do? And in those circumstances where we've seen people redeemed from very deep sins. Are those circumstances where people truly open and honest. And they said, I'm an open book, keep me accountable. And some of you are here and we praise God to see that restoration.

But if you don't fully let all things go and recognize that you are a sinner, that is yet you to blame. And you cannot pass the buck to someone else. You have to say, I take responsibility for the things I need to take responsibility fully. Until you do that, there's no restoration. It's not going to happen.

In Matthew, chapter 5, verse 4, the Greek word for mourn is the strongest word for mourning in the Greek language. There are like nine words that could be used, but this one is the strongest. It is the word which used for mourning for the dead, for the passion and lament for one who was loved.

William Barclay, a commentator of last century, says, mourning here in this pastor is defined as the kind of grief which takes such a hold that it cannot be hidden. It is not only the sorrow which brings an ache to the heart. It is a sorrow which brings the unrestrainable tears to the eyes.

In other words, this beatitude could sound like this. Blessed are those who are intensely sorry for their sin, those who are heartbroken for what their sin has done to God and to Jesus Christ, those who see the cross and who are upholding by the havoc brought by sin.

Now, I said that this is primarily what I think this verse means. Now, that this doesn't mean that in the Scripture and even this text, there's no implications to a larger application of this word of mourning. It doesn't mean that God is not interested in comforting the ones who are mourning for other things rather than sin.

Actually in other parts of the Scriptures, He's very clear He's going to do that or He does that. And I want to tackle that. So beyond this text, the Bible teaches us that God comforts the ones who are mourning over the sins of the world, the ones who are mourning over the sins of the world.

And it's not. It's hard not to mourn over the sins of the world, especially if you are sensitive to God's Word. You see the ways that God has changed you and you see the people's lives around you. They are not changed by you, by God. And you see the problem that sin is bringing.

Psalm 119, verse 136." My eyes shed streams of tears because people do not keep your law."

Prophet Jeremiah, in the Old Testament, he was known as the weeping prophet. And some jokingly say he's known as a weeping prophet because he was a single guy. That's not why he was known as a weeping prophet, because he was feeling for the people of Israel and seeing all the destruction is about to happen.

Luke, chapter 19 we're told that as Jesus goes up to Jerusalem, He says, or He starts weeping and He says, would that you even you, had known on this day the conditions for peace, but now they're hidden from your eyes. Jesus is crying because He sees the sins of Jerusalem and the fact that they're not soft in heart.

So if you're a Christian who mourns for the sins of the ones around you and the sins of this country and of this world, that means that you're a Christian who is sensitive to the things of God and you are in good company. You're in the company of David, Jeremiah and Jesus, to say the least.

But this beatitude has also in mind, I think again, if you extrapolate to the entire Bible, the fact that God is comforting the ones who are mourning over life trials. And one of the most common ones is mourning over the death of a loved one. Abraham wept when his wife died, same with Joseph when his father Jacob died. Or Mary and Martha crying because their brother Lazarus passed away. I want to encourage you in this because the Bible actually sanctions and validates this type of mourning.

And some of you are here because you are just right now, just celebrated the life of a dear one that went to be with the Lord. And you are in this process of mourning and grieving. And I want to tell you, God wants you to mourn in grief.

There is something sometimes in the Christian world that there are people who are well meaning, but they tell you, hey, you know, it's in a better place, so stop crying. That's actually not very helpful. And even for you, it's good to think that he's in a better place. But right now you are feeling the loss. And it's okay to grieve and mourn.

Jesus vindicates that and actually sanctions that in the Bible. It's okay to do that. He did. And we don't know exactly why, but it seems like he saw the consequences of death. The Lazarus tomb, and the Bible says He wept. It's okay to mourn and grieve the loss of dear ones. And it takes a long time, nine months, a year, two years. Some of you, all your life, you're continuing to feel the weight of that because you have shared life with them. Don't feel embarrassed, don't feel like you have to apologize for being in a season when you're mourning and grieving.



And don't chide someone who is in that process of grieving and mourning. Come alongside. If someone just is overwhelmed and it feels like he cannot move and paralyzed by that, this is where you want to gently encourage them. But be very careful.

There's also a right mourning because of discouragement. Second Timothy, chapter one, verses three and four. This is Paul writing in Timothy. "Timothy, I thank God for you. I long to see you again, for I remember your tears as we parted."

Now, why was Timothy crying when Paul was leaving? Because most likely he loved Paul, but also he realized, man, I'm going to be here by myself. It's going to be really discouraging to pastor a church by myself. There are hardships, and Paul would have not done well to say, stop crying. That's not a Christian thing to do.

You might feel in that moment that you want to do that, but that's not right. It's okay to grieve, to mourn at times because life is hard. It's okay to feel discouraged. You might be in a season of life where either you're a young mom with many kids at home and you feel discouraged, or maybe you're in a season of life where relations are not working very well and as the Christian, you feel discouraged. Is there a place for you to mourn and grieve? Does God understand? Yes, he does. Tears of disappointment.

Jeremiah, chapter 9, verse 1. If only my head were a pool of water and my eyes were a fountain of tears, I would weep day and night for all my people who have been slaughtered.

Disappointment over things that are around. Distress, tears of concern.

Acts 20, verse 21. Therefore, be on the alert. This is Paul talking to the Ephesians elders.

"Remembering the night and day. For a period of three years, I did not cease to admonish each one of you with tears." Why would Paul admonish them with tears? Because he's concerned for them. This is like their kid, his kids, spiritual kids. Is it okay to cry for your kids who are not making right decisions in life? Yes. For people in your life who are not making right decisions, it's okay to cry. Yes. Mourn grief again, don't make that central of your life. But there is a place for you to feel that.

By the way, we have the Books of Psalms. The Book of Psalms is filled with emotions. And yes, as someone pointed out, emotions make for a bad driver, but they're good passengers. Don't kick them out of your car. It's good to have some emotions. Emotionless Christian is not what God is striving for. It's not a sign of spirituality.

William Barclay points out in his commentary that the Arabs have a proverb, all sunshine makes a desert. Let us sink in a little bit. The land on which the sun always shines will soon become an arid place which no fruit will grow. There are certain things which only the rains will produce and certain experiences which can only come out of sorrow. We're in California. We praise God for sun all the time, but we pray quite a lot. For what? Rain. You need times of sorrow. God uses sorrow.

Spurgeon said, "I learned to kiss the wave that throws me against the Rock of Ages." I learned to kiss the wave that throws me against the rock of ages, which is Jesus Christ.

God uses sorrow in our lives to teach us more about Him, to teach us more about His Word, to teach us more about heaven, to teach us about others around us and how God actually uses God's people to comfort us, to come alongside us, to strengthen us.

Robert Browning Hamilton has a poem called *Along the Road*, and he says, "I walked a mile with pleasure. She chattered all the way, but left me none the wiser for all she had to say. I walked a mile with sorrow and never a word, said she, but oh, the things I learned from her when sorrow walked with me."

Psalm 23 is one of the most beloved psalms, rightly so, memorized by a lot of kids, a lot of young believers. Rightly so, but probably we need to think more about it. And some of you already saw that there is a change of pace and a change of addressing God in that Psalm. David starts by talking about the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. And then he talks about God as if his third person. He leads me to green pastures. He makes me lie down. It talks about God as being someone out there. But then there's something changing.

And you are with me when I go through the valley of the shadow of death. Do you see that? He changes from third person to second person. All of a sudden God becomes near. In the midst of the valley of the shadow of death, God becomes personal. Until you're in sorrow, God is somewhere out there. But when you are in sorrow, you see Him next to you.

And some of you can attest to this. You probably heard God's voice clearest when you were in a hospital bed or in deep sorrow because of things that you went through. God uses that to get you closer to Him.

What is the reward of the ones who are mourning. Not only that you have knowledge of God in a better way, or you're more aware of God's presence. But He says here specifically, they shall be comforted. They shall be comforted. Now, the emphatic pronoun they indicates that only those who mourn over sin will be comforted. The blessing of God's comfort is reserved exclusively for the contrite of heart. It is only those who mourn for sin who will have their tears wiped away by the loving hand of Jesus Christ. There's no other way. Only they.

Comforted is this word from compound or in Greek *parakaleo*, coming alongside, called to come alongside literally means to help, to encourage, to exhort. As a noun is rendered comforter or helper or encourage.

In John 14:16, we're told that Jesus was the first helper. And then He said, I'm going to send you another helper. The Holy Spirit. As our morning rises to the throne of God, he is unsurpassed and matchless comfort descends from Him by Christ to us. Ours is the God of all comfort, who is always ready to meet our need, admonishing, sympathizing, encouraging and strengthening us.

God is a God of comfort. Christ is a Christ of comfort. And the Holy Spirit is a spirit of comfort. And as someone said, as believers, we have the comfort of the entire Trinity. Praise God.

Then He says, here shall be comforted. Now, this can be a little bit deceptive because it might make us think immediately about the end times. And yes, In Revelation chapter 21, we are told that there's going to be a day when there's no more sorrow, no more pain, and no more sin. And we will be comforted by God.

But in Greek and how it's constructed here, the main implication of this is that you immediately gonna be comforted. Yes, there's gonna be a final comfort we're gonna look forward to, but there's an immediate comfort when you are mourning for your sin. There's an immediate comfort from the Holy Spirit. And you can attest to this, if you have been a Christian for even one day, you know that the way you actually became a Christian is this deep mourning for sin. And then there is this peace that God gave you that came from nowhere, this comfort that the Holy Spirit brings in your life when He takes habitation and dwelling of your heart.

God is not only the God of future comfort, but of a present comfort. Second Thessalonians, chapter 2, verse 16. Paul says, "God our Father already has given us eternal comfort and Good hope by grace."

Even God's word is a comfort to our hearts. I hope that even through this sermon you were comforted. We get comfort all the time. Believers are a comfort. They bring comfort to us. That's why we want to emphasize that we are a body, that this is not a place that you go to. It's not like a theater where you listen to a sermon or a song and you see some kind of crazy Romanian saying something and you go on home. If you like him or not. This is meant to be a body of believers that are encouraging one another. We want to encourage you, hey, stay on the plaza, have cookies and coffee and whatever. Just talk with each other because you might be comforting others or you might be comforting yourself. It's meant to be a body of believers.

Unfortunately, churches have become this place where you just go in and out. And there's a lot of ninja Christians come in without a trace and go out without a trace. I pray you're not one of those. I pray that you're thinking about, how can I comfort someone who is around me? Get to know them. Love on them. Ask them, hey, how are you doing? How's your family? How's your health? What's some areas you need encouragement? That's how God designed the body of Christ, to work not for gossip, but for health.

Pastor said happiness comes to sad people because their Godly mourning leads to God's comfort. Come to me, says Jesus, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. He will lift the burden from those who mourn over sin, and He will give rest to those who are weary of sin. As often as we confess our sin, He is faithful to forgive. And for as long as we mourn over sin, He's faithful to comfort.

A couple more applications that we close this morning beyond the ones I already shared. If you're not a Christian, God brought you here today to tell you about his holiness, about His perfection, and about your sinfulness. He wanted you to know that not only that, you're not living life according to how He designed it to be. So you're actually not enjoying life to the fullest to how He designed it to be. You're just having surrogates, you're just having pretend joys. It's not even close to the real deal. Not only that, but you're also. You're also under the.

You're liable for God's judgment and eternal damnation. You're under His judgment if you don't change your ways.

And I want to encourage you, if you feel discouraged, if you feel like man, there is things in my life that I can do better. There's things that in my life that they are sinful, that I'm not kind, I'm not being generous with others. I am adulterers at heart. I probably sometimes say lies, white lies, but I'm still sinful. If you feel this weight, I want to tell you that God doesn't want you to make your life better yourself. He doesn't want you to clean up yourself and then come to God. He actually tells you, stop trying because there's nothing you can do to make yourself better.

Religion doesn't help you. What helps you is to recognize that He is holy and you're not. To get on your knees and cry out to Him. He will change your life. He will take you as you are, but He will never leave you as you are. He will transform your heart and life. That's what you should think about.

Religion keeps telling you, try harder and harder and try this thing and this and maybe find another religion or that religion. They all have this in common. You're right. All religious have this in common because they're not a true Gospel from God. A true Gospel from God says, no, it's all paid for. Stop trying. You cannot actually ever achieve it because the requirement is full perfection. You'll never get there. Get on your knees, cry out to God. He will change your life. I promise you.

If you're a Christian, I already share with you that God encourages you to mourn and He will comfort you. But I also want to encourage you, if you're one of those Christians who has professed Christ for some years and probably some of us have been there, but kind of went on a different trajectory in life, and we don't feel any more mourning over our sins. But there's also not joy of our salvation. I'll tell you what happened.

It's similar to what Jesus says to one of the churches in Revelation. We have lost our first love. But you know why we lost our first love? Because we started to be accustomed with sin, materialism. Ah, not so bad. Comfort. Ah, not so bad. Things I struggle with, not so bad. So you get more accustomed to those. You feel more at peace with your sin. But then what you don't realize it actually robs the joy of salvation and the desire to do the things that God wants you to do.

So what I want to encourage you is see your sin as God sees your sin. Don't downplay it just because you're not committing hideous sins that they're public and disqualifying doesn't mean that you shouldn't repent. If you have a heart that is humble in spirit and mourning for your sin, you also have the joy of salvation. Because with mourning comes comfort and comes joy. But if you don't have the mourning, there's no more joy. So I think praying through that, I've seen it in my own life by the way, I'm not just talking about some friends. We need to come back to Christ, and my prayer is that we would do that. May God bless us in that.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for your Word. I do pray that we would be a people that finds all our comfort in you. That we'd be sensitive to sin, not get accustomed to it, desensitized to it. Help us to see sin as you see sin and help us to see your Gospel as available to us on a regular

basis. Yes, we do thank you for saving us. But we want to be refreshed and renewed in our walk with you. And the way we do that is to confess our sin on a regular basis, to acknowledge that we do have sin as First John says, and to come to you and confess it, knowing that you're gonna cleanse us and give us the joy of salvation. That's what we want. If there are people here today who don't know you, they don't know you as a happy God, a God who embraces all who come with contrite hearts. I pray that today they will know you for who you are. So, Lord, work in hearts, change hearts. We pray this in Jesus name, and all God's people said Amen. Let's pray.