

Comfort for Spiritual Mourners

by William Gadsby

The Lord's people who mourn over their sinfulness and wretchedness, and who long for a deeper feeling of God's presence, are blessed and will be comforted.

Scripture: Psalm 38:3, Psalm 42:1, Isaiah 61:3, Matthew 5:4, Romans 7:24, 1 John 3:2

Topics: "Spiritual Mourning", "Gods Comfort"

Description

William Gadsby preaches on the blessedness of those who mourn, emphasizing that true mourners are those who grieve over their sinfulness and lack of intimacy with God. These spiritual mourners long for the light of God's countenance and a deep experience of His mercy and love. Despite their struggles, they are assured of comfort and blessings from God, finding solace in the promise that they shall be comforted by the Lord.

Transcript

"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4)

Not all kinds of mourners are here intended; for there is the sorrow of the world, which worketh death and produces nothing but sin, misery, and rebellion against God. Some mourn because they cannot increase in riches, honours, and pleasures; but there is no blessing promised to them. The mourners which God has pronounced blessed are such as mourn over themselves and after God. The Lord's spiritual mourners mourn over their sinfulness and wretchedness, as sinners against a holy, righteous, good, and kind God. The filth and corruption of their fallen nature give them real grief and pain of heart. Its daily bubbleings and risings up are a real plague to them. They are no strangers to what Solomon means by the plague of the heart; (1 Kings 8:38) and daily experience, under the teachings of God the Holy Ghost, proves to them that this plague is deeply rooted, and breaks out in bubbleings up in a thousand different ways; and when the Lord is pleased to hide the light of his countenance and make them feel his righteous displeasure against sin, with the psalmist they mourn and say, "There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin." (Ps. 38:3)

The dear child of God sometimes mourns over hardness of heart and darkness of soul. Neither judgments for mercies appear to move him, nor does he seem able to raise a tender thought up to God, if he must perish for the want of one. At times, the only feeling he appears to have is a secret mourning because he is so hard, and so dark, and so incapable of deeply mourning. Now and then a solemn sigh heaves up his breast, which speaks language like unto this: "O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the

body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24) All the life he seems to have is to mournfully breathe out Job's confession, "Behold, I am vile." And as the Lord is pleased to give him a deeper feeling of his vileness, he is led sensibly to cry, "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:6) Yea, "I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, O God." (Ezra 9:6) Such souls mourn because they have so little intercourse with God, and are so much entangled with the things of the world.

Now while the poor children of God mourn over themselves, they mourn after God. They mourn after the liftings up of the light of his countenance and a sweet and solemn enjoyment of his pardoning mercy, through the precious blood of the Lamb; and with panting desires they cry, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me;" (Ps. 4:6) "For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great. Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged. O bring thou me out of my distresses. Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins." (Ps. 25:11,16-18) Thus God's people will, at times, deeply pant for and mourn after God's rich manifestive mercy and pardoning love. The believer has no real happiness when he has no sweet intercourse with the Lord. He daily pants to feel more and more of the blessedness couched in this soul-refreshing, God-glorifying truth: "And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3) Like David, he can say, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God;" (Ps. 42:1,2) for a sweet and blessed enjoyment of interest in him, as my own covenant God,--Father, Son and Spirit.--"Yes," says the mourning soul; "I want to feel that Israel's One Triune God is my God, for ever and ever, and that he will be my guide even unto death. My great fear is, lest I should be sitting down content with a dead, formal religion, without the life and power of vital godliness. O that I could feel a greater conformity to Christ, and live more in the enjoyment of him, as my all and all!"

"More frequent let thy visits be,

Or let them longer last;

I can do nothing without thee;

Make haste, O God, make haste."

Such mourners are blessed. The dear Lord of the house does not merely say they may, or shall be, blessed; but they absolutely are blessed; now blessed, though they may not be able to enjoy the blessings which belong to them: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3) Thus they have secured in Christ all that can make them holy or happy, all that can give them a title to heaven and meetness for it, and convey them safe there, and be their glory when they are there: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32)

Poor, sin-burdened, Satan-hunted, broken-hearted mourners! All things are yours; for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's. Your life is hid with Christ in God, and because he lives ye shall live also. The blessed Redeemer is anointed to comfort his mourners, "to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." (Isa. 61:3) Yes, bless his precious and glorious name! In his own time he will, by the power of his Spirit, discover unto them the beauty of his own Person and righteousness; and then they shall see the King in his beauty, (Isa. 33:17) as the Lord their righteousness and strength. Jesus, in his Person, blood, and obedience; in his glorious offices, characters, relationship, names, honours, fullness, love, and loveliness,

shall be revealed unto them, by the glorious power and under the divine anointing of God the Holy Ghost; and this shall produce a solemn joy in their souls, a joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then shall their sorrow be turned into joy, and with holy pleasure and heavenly tranquility, they shall blessedly sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." (Isa. 61:10)

Faith shall triumph in Christ, and sing "Victory," even with a prospect of great trouble before its eye: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." (Hab. 3:17-19) Zion's mourners must and shall have their times of comfort, their feasts, as well as their fastings. The enemy may, at times, appear to triumph, and with sneering contempt say, "Where is now thy God?" and the soul appear to sink a thousand fathoms in a moment, and say, "My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over of my God;" but the Lord will appear, and draw forth faith in divine exercise, into the Person, oath, and promise of a covenant God; and, with solemn confidence in God, faith shall say, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me. He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness. Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the Lord thy God? Mine eyes shall behold her; now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets." (Mic. 7:8-10) And O what heavenly comforts await the child of God in the world to come: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2) "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted."

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