



Our Heavy Hearts

February 2021

For it to be the month known for love, it seems the dark is overtaking our world right now. It's coming from every direction. From the unrest of racial injustice and the ongoing impact of a worldwide pandemic, to the horror of our democracy under attack from within. It seems we are submerged, longing for air, trying not to drown in an inky abyss.

On a more personal level, we may have had nasty words with a family member or a friend causing distress. Or perhaps a relationship we've counted on can no longer be trusted. Maybe a loved one has died, and we didn't get to touch them, hold them, or tell them we love them.

During these days of darkness with our spirits sagging, we may cry out to God, "WHY?"

Why must there be such pain and affliction? Why did you take away the person who was loved by so many? Why are people so mean to one another? Why oh why can't we just get along?

What shall we do with our heavy hearts?

We're desperate for some relief from sorrow and angst. We need a break from the depressing news all around. We're seeking a way back into relationship with those who have hurt us and made it hard to love them.

Perhaps that is what was intended when Jesus said in Mathew 5:5, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

When we are poor in spirit, we have a source to turn to. We can throw ourselves at the feet of Jesus and cry out, "I can't take it anymore, I need you Father; take control and give me rest. I want the comfort only you can give. I want you to cleanse me of this ache; lift this heavy heart.

And, there it is.

The remedy for the poor of spirit is to become humble. To admit we are helpless without His mercy. To overcome our grief, rid ourselves of dejection or from being at odds with those we love, is to have a burning desire to please God. To draw closer to the Lord – to seek His way.

That's so easy to say and yet so difficult to do. We're smart, we're capable. We want to depend upon our own skills – after all, we've been trained in how to...

Perhaps Jesus is saying in the Beatitudes that it is a blessing to recognize our need to be filled with the grace that only God can give, the Holy Spirit.

We must recognize that we can't fix what ails us on our own. We fix our problems by calling upon the Holy Spirit to change *us*. To help us to accept a loss. To help us truly forgive those who have hurt us. To guide our thoughts and thereby our hearts to a place of healing.

This concept is reiterated in Paul's writing in 2 Corinthians 12:9: But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." (NIV)

God says we are to claim our weaknesses—because weaknesses reveal His power and make us more dependent on him. There is no doubt about His power. We need to call upon it and do what God's word says to do in times of conflict.

God is teaching us His ways through these dark days of difficulties. As we seek Him, our darkness becomes His light. As we apply the teachings of Jesus, we are blessed by His grace, and we grow in spirit. We begin to see that these challenges we're living through are not intended to hurt us, but to bless us as we seek God in soothing our heavy hearts.

As we do this, as we act the way the Lord teaches us. We change our own thoughts and behaviors. We become examples of Christ-like people.

After all, that is what we as Christians are supposed to be doing. In fact, Luke teaches in Acts 13:47, "For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

There are people all around us who are suffering from heavy hearts. Friends and family have lost loved ones in COVID. Some have lost their jobs and homes. The relationships of

parents and their precious children have changed as the stress of becoming teacher, as well as parent has continued for months.

It's in these trying times, we are to be the light shining out of the darkness. To do that, we must give Him thanks, forgive those who disappoint and most importantly, serve others. There's enough hurt going on, let's reach out. For it is in service that we will heal our own spirits and receive His hand of grace.

Prayer for Today:

Father God, I place my heavy heart into your loving care. Thank You for constantly forgiving me and giving me the strength to do the same. I ask for the Holy Spirit to guide my thoughts and actions as I encounter others. Help me see what I need to see today and do what I need to do so my life reflects Your glory. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.

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