

<b>Topic</b>	The Norms of the Kingdom: Poor in Spirit and Mournful
<b>Reference</b>	Matthew
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<b>Speaker</b>	Dr Peter Ng

Morning church. Welcome back to FBC ministry of the word. We are going through the gospel of Matthew. Today's topic is the Norms of the Kingdom, dealing with the first two beatitudes, the poor in spirit and those who mourn, Matthew chapter 5 verses 1-4.

The context of Jesus' ministry in this very famous Sermon on the Mount, we need to go back and we have to go back as far as Matthew chapter 4 verses 15 to 16

The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles - 16 the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region, and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.

So the context of the land of Israel is there is a change. The people who are dwelling in darkness have now seen a great light and those dwelling in the region of the shadow of death, on them a light has dawned. The context of the Sermon on the Mount has come at a time where there is a change from darkness into light, somethings happen across the land. Not very much different if you look at the presidential inauguration a couple of weeks ago where a new administration has taken place, and I'd like to look at this beautiful poem by a youngest poet there called Amanda Gorman. She wrote a poem called The Hill We climb. And this poem actually reflects the sentiments of even the time of the sermon on Mount.

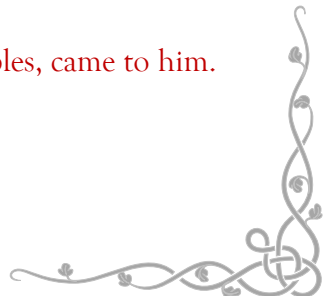
**When the day comes, we step out of the shade, flame and unafraid, the new dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light, if only we are brave enough to see it. If only we are brave enough to o be it.**

So there is a passing from darkness into light, and that light is the light of Jesus. And so therefore the message which Jesus brings because darkness is going away, the light is coming, a new administration is coming, a new kingdom is coming.

**From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

The Greek word is metanoia, which basically is a change in mindset. A mindset that is appropriate for darkness, changing to a mindset that is appropriate for light. So therefore we come into this Sermon on Mount that talks about all the blessedness. So Jesus's vision is now the vision of the kingdom of light, vision for the kingdom of living and we need to understand how important this particular passage is. This is a similar setting to Moses,

**Matthew 5:1 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain and he sat down, his disciples, came to him.**



Similar setting, there is a mountain just like Moses and the setting is just like Moses. Moses brings in the law of the old covenant, Jesus brings in the paradigm of the new covenant. There a lot of similarities between Moses and Jesus.

- Both had dreams connected to their births.
- Both experienced slaughter of babies associated with their birth.
- Both had a narrow escape from a death spot to return later.
- Moses spent 40 years in a desert. Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness.
- Both have miracles associated with their ministry.
- And Moses brought the people to the promised land. Jesus said that we would inherit the new heavens and the new earth.

So this is a dramatic new covenant initiation. Now the kingdom mindset, right?

**Matthew 5:2 And he opened his mouth and he taught them saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

The word blessed is basically Makarios in Greek. Now it has been variously translated by certain Bibles like Good News Bible, Makarios is translated as happy, smiley, but I don't think it does much credit to the word. Happy comes from the root of an old English word called hap, which means luck, as if happiness dependent on chance or luck or been haphazard events. Remember Pharrell Williams song happy. I'm so happy. Come along if you feel like a room without a roof. Or the old Toyota add, where you go buy Toyota over the feelings. Happiness depends on something you've bought or an event that's happened to us. Another way of translating this beyond happiness, which I don't think it should be rightly translated as such is Makarios is blessing, which is the most common translation, but the problem is that this is divine effectual speech. It means some good which God confers on that person.

It is like going to the temple. This is a Japanese temple in Tokyo. People go, they come to the temple to get a blessing and look at the blessings, you know, education and learning, pass exams, relationship, good luck, get a good girl. But everything costs money in 500 yen, 1000 yen. You need to give something in order to get something. And the problem with this translation of Makarios, the blessing is that blessed are the poor in spirit. This is something that must be taken, a condition that must be fulfilled and then the blessing comes for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. This is the good that comes to a person.

**Blessed are those who mourn**, this is the action that must be taken in order for the condition to be fulfilled. And this is the action, so that good may come to that particular person. This is a distortion, and that's why these are prosperity gospel pastor called Creflo Dollar. He says,

**But the blessing is much more than that. It is actually an empowerment to prosper and have success in every area of our lives. So how do we get this success? How do we activate the blessing in our lives, by speaking the word of God, God's word is blessed and when we begin to understand the power of our words and align that with what the Bible says, we turn on the power of blessing. It will begin working for us in us, around us, where we use our mouth to declare the word with boldness and in faith.**

Is this what the blessing is about? It is some good to be activated by a particular condition. People have taken these extremes. Here is an article recently where the Russian Orthodox church has been blessing nuclear weapons in their particular country.

Now the actual meaningful Makarios. What is it? Well, Makarios is a Greek word, which describes the internal disposition of a person. It describe someone with the ultimate state of inner joy that not really dependent on circumstances, it's a flourishing. It is satisfaction of life beyond care and in God's eyes, someone to be envied and emulated. It is like Jesus is pointing out to these disciples sitting on the mountain, and he say these are the blessed. These are the ones that are the ultimate state of inner joy. These are the ones who are flourishing. These are the ones, they are going to have satisfaction with life beyond care. These are the blessed. And it's actually counter-cultural because if you look at all the beatitudes, it is completely different with the values of the world. In the world we celebrate the rich. Did Jesus said, you need to be poor in spirit. In the world we celebrate rather than we mourn. In the world we perhaps want to be proud and aggressive rather than be meek. In the world we hunger for money, but Jesus tells the hunger for righteousness. In the world we are vindictive, but Jesus tells us to be merciful. In the world we are self-serving and Jesus tells us to be pure hearted. In the world we are divisive, Jesus tells us to be peacemakers. The world persecutes Christians, Christians are persecuted.

So whatever Jesus is doing here is actually counter cultural, but it's something that describes what kingdom living truly is. This is Eugene Peterson who wrote the translation of Bible called Message and he encapsulates it very well in these words,

**Scripture does not present us with a moral code and tell us live up to this. Not as it's set out a system of doctrine and say, think like this and you will live well.” Rather the biblical ways to tell a story and in the telling invite: Live into this, this is what it looks like to be human in a God made and God ruled world. This is what is involved in becoming and maturing as a human being, truly being in the image of God.**

It's like mother reading to a child about superheroes. How brave, how full of integrity and when you read that fairy tale. You're actually inviting the child to live into this. It's like looking at the captain of marvels and all the superheroes. There are wise invitation to the kind of life that will flourish on this earth. This is what Jesus is saying by Makarios. Blessed are they. So beatitudes are actually a redefinition of who the people of God are.

If you are the people of God, if you are the people of the kingdom, if you are living in the light, this is what you must be.

**Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

Now there's a parallel passage in Luke chapter 6 verse 20. Blessed are you who are poor for yours is the kingdom of God. There's a discrepancy here. On one hand Luke talks about being poor, materially poor Matthew talks about being poor in spirit. So actually what Matthew is doing is giving a wider explanation of what being poor in spirit means, which is basically no merit or works that were actually grey shaded

before God, really totally dependent on him. Whereas Luke is talking about being physically poor, but there is probably an element of both in what this beatitude means.

DA Carson actually describes spiritual bankruptcy is emptying ourselves of self-righteousness, moral self-esteem and personal vain glory. The problem is not spiritual bankruptcy, the problem with us is that we don't recognize that we are spiritually bankrupt. So, it would be better to say blessed are those who actually recognize that they are spiritually bankrupt because everybody, whether you recognize it or not are spiritually poor, we are all bankrupt, but it is the recognition that is important. It is like being ill. Remember the diagnosis of schizophrenia, people who are quite mad, loss contact with reality. What are the diagnostic criteria? Schizophrenia is that lack of insight, the moment the person understands he got schizophrenia means he doesn't have schizophrenia. It is a lack of insight and spiritual bankruptcy is actually like that.

People who are spiritually bankrupt have no insight into the fact that they actually spiritually bankrupt. Here's a spiritual challenge to the church. We're looking at the Book of Revelations in our Gamma studies and there is a letter to the Laodicean church. Now this letter illustrates perfectly because Laodicea was a rich banking center in the middle of a trade routes at a famous medical center that has special eye ointment, so that people who are blind could have their sight restored. They were so rich that when they actually had an earthquake in the area, they didn't need any funds from Rome in order to rebuild. And it is only city with two amphitheater. To have an amphitheater is like a stadium would be a great luxury. They had a Roman theater and they actually had a Greek theater and Laodicea has only 40,000 people. Whereas Ephesus with 200,000 people had only one theater. This is how rich they were and this is Jesus saying to them.

For you say, I am rich, I've prospered and I need nothing. Not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.

And so therefore people who are spiritually poor never recognize it. That's why in Revelation, the symbols use for the system of the world is actually Babylon. The great Babylon or the prostitute that attracts people in, but actually are full of abominations. Revelations chapter 18 verse 3 talks about the world, drinking, the people were drinking the world's Kool-Aid.

For all the nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality and the kings of earth have committed immorality of her and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of a luxurious living.

Luxurious living, influence of the world makes us a blind to our spiritual bankruptcy. The other thing that makes us blind to our spiritual bankruptcy is love. There are three kinds of self-love,

A natural self-love where we actually look after ourselves. For example, if I had a dog come and chase you, you probably run away. Why? Because, you are trying to preserve yourself. You're sick. You see a doctor. Why? Because you are trying to preserve yourself. This is natural self-love, but there are two other kinds of love.

One is a sinful kind of self-love and this sinful kind of self-love is described as when our thoughts or our affections and designs center only on our own fleshy interests and rifle or deprive God of his honor. Thus the natural self-love in itself good becomes criminal by the access and whether it would be superior and not subordinate to God. So the sinful self-love tends to push ourselves up above everybody else in the world and above rightful owner of honor who is actually God.

In 1960s there was a book written by some authors called *The Loveables* and this book started the emphasis on self-esteem. It was actually based on the teachings of John Vasconcellos, who is basically a California law maker. He put forward the idea of self-esteem being center to all the maladaptive behavior in the world. He said,

**If low self esteem is tied to so many maladaptive responses, to so many forms of underachievement and bad behavior, then surely raising kids and others self-esteem could bring with it untold benefits.**

So you've got drug addiction, you've got truancy, you've got gangsterism. Now if you actually raise the child's self-esteem then may be all those things would disappear. Right. If we can just improve self-esteem it will solve a lot of problems. So therefore we actually live in a climate, we live in a society where it is very hard to admit you're spiritually bankrupt. It's very hard to say sorry, it's very hard to say we're wrong because all the time we are trying to bolster our self-esteem. Our self-esteem is based on our wealth, our success, our ability and so therefore to preserve that we over plan, we can't sleep because we are worried about our jobs. We are angry at someone else because there's someone else when he actually insult, chips away at our self-worth and self-esteem. We are anxious about our financial situation. We are anxious about tomorrow. Why? Because it all eats away on who we are. We avoid certain people, we're defensive when people criticize us or we retaliate because we're actually protecting our self-esteem.

Why does the LGBTQ movements move so ferociously in society to gain their rights. And part of the reason is to reduce the shame. Am I a bad person? Just because I'm gay. And even my parents accept me, do I disappoint them? So they are trying to raise their level of self-esteem so much so that they're not looked upon in a bad way by society. And therefore reduces this idea of really being spiritually bankrupt.

Guess which ex-president said this, I know more about ISIS than the generals do. I know more about courts than any human being on earth. Nobody knows more about trade than me. I know more about renewables than any human being on earth. Technology, nobody knows more about technology than me. Now you could say all these sort of things and later on, you can find after he has left the White House, this Deborah Birx, who is basically in charge of his COVID-19 task force. And she said,

**I saw the president presenting graphs that I never made. Someone inside was creating a parallel set of data and graphics that were shown to the president."**

So we choose the facts that will fit the narrative that we want that will bolster the lies that we tell. Why? Because we're trying to preserve our self-esteem. In that climate, when the whole society is moving in this particular direction, it is very difficult for a believer to come to a situation in his life when he is spiritually bankrupt. But when reality hits, you can see whatever you say, the COVID-19 graphs goes higher and higher.

The spiritual reality of life hits us, just like the virus. In this life we have the physical life, but the trouble is the physical life is not all there is in life. We often forget there is an eternal life for every single person in this world. There is an afterlife and then we should actually be looking at all of life. All of life is actually including our physical life now and our eternal life later on and the third dimension of self-love is a gracious self-love. We should love ourselves so much so that we're actually preparing our eternal life and our physical life, preparing it for the best reality.

**But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.**

If we only focus on the self love here, we are not really loving ourselves through all eternity and to all of life. Now Paul Tripp, renowned pastor actually shared these words, which was very insightful.

**In my tears, I had no idea how blessed I was. I had no idea of the horrible deceitfulness of sin. I had no idea that the natural self-righteousness that is in my heart of every sinner. I had no idea that most people have no idea how dark their condition actually is.**

He actually say, the greatest gift in his life is awareness of sin. To realize that he is spiritually bankrupt.

**I had no idea how skilled we sinners are at giving self-atoning arguments for what we have said and done, in an attempt to remove any real guilt for sin.**

Remember the parable of the tax collector and the pharisee.

**Luke 18, The tax collector standing far off would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner. 14 I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.**

Here you actually have two people, the Pharisee who basically stands in front of God as it were rich in good works and then you've got the tax collector. The tax collector is the one who says be merciful to me, he is spiritually bankrupt and he just says, forgive me. Be merciful to me, I am a sinner and total counterrevolutionary style. Jesus said this man, the tax collector instead of pharisee went home justified by God.

And there's a context for this. The context for the parable is verse 9.

**He told his parable to some who trusted in themselves, that they were righteous and treated others with contempt.**

And that is the natural tendency where we trust ourselves that we are righteous. We cannot see our blindness and not only can see the blindness, we treat others with contempt.

Those who are spiritually bankrupt have no insight into their lives. We focus on false values. Matthew chapter 7 verse 22.

On that day, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesied in your name. And we cast demons out in your name and we do many mighty works in your name.

So therefore their self-esteem is actually filled with self-value as if they could come to God on that last day and present themselves to God and gain credit with God and say that the things that we did are the things that contribute to our spiritual richness. And this is actually a false value. The solution to the Laodicean church is the same solution to us for our spiritual bankruptcy. Jesus said,

I will counsel you to buy gold from me, refined by fire so that you may be rich and white garments so that you be closed yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.

The solution is to ask Jesus to open up our eyes to our spiritual nakedness. You see, in the Old Testament, you look at the story of Abraham and Sarah, why did they wait 20 years before their son was actually born? What about Gideon and the 300? He had 30,000 Israelites soldiers against a hundred thousand Midianites and God cut it down to 300. Why? Because you cannot see, we cannot see the glory of God unless you are spiritually poor. Unless they waited 20 years, unless Gideon had only 300 against a hundred thousand, he would not be able to see the power and the glory of God. And today God is telling us, we need to recognize that we are spiritually poor.

Apostle Paul was a persecutor of church until one day on Damascus road God confronted him, a life transforming experience. And he writes these words,

But whenever gain I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed I count everything is loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus. For his sake, I suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I may gain Christ.

So he actually had an active process of looking to the past and he looked at all the things that he was proud of, they were counted as advantages to him; circumcision, being part of the chosen race, being the tribe of Benjamin, Hebrew of Hebrews, a Pharisee, a persecutor, a person who has kept the law completely. And he went underwent metanoia, a change in his mindset and then with his mindset of Christ who came into his life, suddenly he looks back to the past and all the things that he thought were great that was part of his CV suddenly becomes very small. And in fact, he says the things I now I thought were great from my CV, now are called harmful, loss, liability, disadvantage. He's got a completely different change in the mindset. And repentance is like that.

Brothers and sisters, when we've repented, have we changed our mindset? Have we looked at the CV that we have in the past? The things that we've valued that made us walk tall, were those things looked at and when you look at it now, do you see them in the same way or are they seen as liabilities, disadvantages rather than advantages? We used to think as urologists that if you took vitamin E that would actually decrease the rate of prostate cancer. But years later on, they did a study in the United States and they found out, instead of reducing the rate of prostate cancer it actually increased the rate of prostate cancer and who takes vitamin E anymore. Nobody. Why? Because it's a disadvantage, it's a liability. You wouldn't

want to take it anymore would you. That's the same way at which we look at all our spiritual credentials or our righteousness.

What about fish oil? Good for your heart but bad for your prostate. So therefore we don't take fish oil anymore because it actually increases the rate of prostate cancer. Now that's why Jesus said,

*Matthew 11, come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

So therefore adding to our own self-esteem is the one that causes us a burden. Jesus is asking us to let it go. Stop striving for your own righteousness. Verse 9 of chapter 3 of Philippians

*And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own*

Because getting a righteousness of your own is so burdensome, we can't do it. That comes from the law. What we need to look at that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God. That depends on faith. So true repentance actually leads to true rest in Christ. And then we change our direction of mindset and we change the direction of our life. Verse 10, so that I may know him.

So therefore we strive, what is our ambition that may know him, the power of his resurrection, I may share in his suffering, becoming like him in his death that by any means possible, I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

*Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted.*

What does that mean? Well, mourning is a visceral reaction to spiritual poverty. It's like looking at your bank account. Suddenly you open a bank account. If it's zero, you have a visceral response shock. It was \$2 billion you have got a visceral response, something else. So it's actually, if you really understood your spiritual poverty then you would actually have a reaction that would be a sense of mourning. Mourning is seen in the world the way God sees it.

*Psalm 51, For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifice of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart. O God which you will not despise.*

God is not pleased or impressed with all the details of your CV. He is impressed with a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, and so therefore we're talking about emotion. In Luke six, it describes situations where the beatitudes cast on one side and then there are woes cast on the other side. And so if you look at Luke 6:25

*Woe to you who laugh now for you shall mourn and weep. Blessed are those who weep now for you shall laugh.*



So you actually should have a change in mindset. Those of you who laugh now is simply because you're only looking at the physical side of life. This is due to the sinful self-love. You actually haven't taken into consideration all the rest because blessed are you who weep now for you shall laugh and that's loving your whole self. Eternal self life, as well as physical life.

It's like the change in mindset. It's like looking at jeans, I've got a couple of genes which I'd be wearing in the 1970s. You know, what we used to wear? Bell-bottoms. I loved my bell bottoms. In 1960s and 1970s, when you walk around university you've got a bell bottom, you walk proud, everybody looking at you, great. Try doing that today. People will laugh at you. You walk in university today, you got to wear this one. So therefore there are two emotions. Today, if you walk in university, you wear a bell bottom you will be ashamed. If you wear this, you'll be feeling proud. Each emotion accompanies a change in mindset isn't it.

Ezekiel chapter nine verse 4 to 6

And the Lord said to you, “pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sign and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it.

So therefore the people of God in the city of Jerusalem pass through it and put a mark, but the mark of God is only put on those who actually see the sinfulness to corruption and degradation of society and they actually viscerally feel about it. Right. And when they do that

And to the others he said in my hearing, “Pass through the city after him, and strike. Your eye shall not spare, and you shall show no pity. 6 Kill old men outright, young men and maidens, little children and women, but touch no one on whom is the mark

So, the people of God are marked out, the people of God are the ones who actually sigh and groan, have a visceral reaction to all the sin that's committed in the city. See emotions arise from a mind change. Emotions arise from taking off the word and putting it into our DNA. Psalm 119:136 says

My eyes shed streams of tears because the people did not keep your law.

Not only I shed tears because of my own sin. I also shed tears because your people did not keep your laws. Mourning is important because it produces the emotional capacity for transformation.

2 Cor 7:10 For Godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

There are three kinds of grief; one is a natural grief which you get when you lose a loved one. You go to a funeral and you see that kind of natural grief, the wailing. Jesus had that who cried over people who actually died. Then you have got the sinful grief and the godly brief and the sinful grief comes from self pity. Because every sin has a passing joy with it and sometimes people grieve because they miss the passing joy that comes with this particular sin.

Rev 18:9 and the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. 11 And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore.

They are not weeping out of pure people, they are actually weeping for themselves because every sin has its passing joy with it and they are actually from self-pity. So there are two kinds of grief. A grief that will cause self presumption or the grief that will cause repentance and the grief that will transform us is the grief that causes us to change our attitude, change our emotions and module our behavior. The other worldly grief will bring death because there is no change in our behavior. We are still insensitive to our sin and whatever change is actually only transient.

Here is a testimony from Jessie Golem, a former youth pastor who actually was quite active in the church until something happened to her life and she actually turned from Christ and you know what she said. She said,

*Our “eternal life” is wholly dependent on us loving God. There is no choice. How can that be true love? “Love God, or go to hell”? How cruel is that?*

*“I no longer want to feel like I am incapable or inherently flawed, or unable to do things without God. It feels more empowering, great, and wonderful to believe in myself..”*

*“..and I now I can do things because I can. And that I am not a product of sin, but a human being with wishes, hopes and dreams. I have infinite possibilities, not because a god allows it to be so”*

Here you actually have she feeling as if God is putting a gun to her head, love God or go to hell, how cruel is that, that is what she said and the true reality is that spiritual poverty to her was actually illusion or something she had to believe in order to be saved. There are a lot of people like that even in our church today.

We have got a emaciated faith. How do you know you’ve got a emaciated faith? Well, the faith that has got no mourning, why, because the faith is actually merely intellectual assent. Yeah, I am a sinner. Yeah, Jesus died on the cross, but there is very little emotion associated with that. It is a faith that is based on a sinner’s prayer. A repentance is just said on admitting you a sinner, saying the magical words of the sinner’s prayer and then you are actually a Christian? So therefore that kind of faith is an emaciated kind of faith that actually has no roots in spiritual reality because the person is not saved. This is true repentance.

Isaiah 55:6-7

6 “Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; 7 let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

True repentance is a total change in mindset and direction where you actually continually seek God, forsake your ways, change your thoughts and return to God, that is the essence of a true faith. So blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. So when you actually get down on your knees and feel

the terrifying effects of sin, we mourn but that mourning does not bring you to an end of your life in despair.

Remember Judas, he had regret but it was not a Godly grief, it was an ungodly grief. He said, it brought him so much so that he threw his 30 pieces of silver and he actually hung himself. True mourning does not bring you to the end of your life but actually brings you to hope in Christ. See, mourning is like a coin with two sides. On one side is grief but the grief propels you to the other side, which is hope. If you hope an ungodly grief it will just have one side. The grief will be the end of yourself. So true grief is actually important because it powers you, it moves you towards hope and the hope is always in Christ. That's why Paul says,

### 2 Cor 4:8-10

8 We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.

So therefore there is a mourning that we feel that drives us towards the hope and the hope is the one that is manifested in our bodies because of what Christ has done. So therefore because he now has basically a change in mindset, the direction in his life is different. The mourning causes him to turn to Christ and that the only hope in life is actually to know him, to share in his sufferings, to be like him that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection of the dead.

There is a total mind shift. So these are things that we are looking for, compassion, meekness, hunger, mercifulness, purity, peacemakers and being persecuted. If there is a genuine conversion, if there is a genuine faith, if there is genuine repentance, these are the values that will shine out from our lives and if they don't shine out from our lives, we need to question whether we have an emaciated faith that is not real, like that youth pastor who actually left her faith.

Christ should so fill us that at the bottom of our hearts, the reason we have a bounce in our steps, the reason why we have love and joy and peace and confidence and hope and courage is because of what Christ has done, because mourning has driven us there. It allows us to be real servants, why, because we can afford to be real servants because we are rich. We have been driven to the richest that is in Christ and when good things happen to us we don't boast of these things because of what we have done, we value them because they are result of what God has given us. When bad things happen to us, failure does not define us because it is a manner in which God is using to refine us from day to day.