

ECHO CHURCH

No Games. No Gimmicks. Just God.

The Weight That Changes You

REBRAND: Part 2

Matthew 5:4 NKJV

Sunday, July 12, 2026 | Pastor Rich Saunders Jr.

Main Thought

There are moments when God allows us to feel the weight of what He feels, not to crush us, condemn us, or shame us, but to transform us. Mourning is not spiritual weakness. It is the appropriate response when a God-dependent person becomes aware of the distance between what God desires and what currently exists.

Big Sermon Question

When Scripture reaches your heart and reveals what is wrong within you, do you defend it, excuse it, and rename it, or do you let it grieve you?

Sermon Scriptures

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Matthew 5:4 NKJV

Opening

One of the dangers of being around Scripture for a long time is that we can learn how to hear the Word without allowing ourselves to feel the weight of the Word. We know the verses. We know the language. We know when to say amen, when to raise our hands, and how to identify what the preacher is about to say before the preacher says it. But familiarity with Scripture does not automatically produce transformation through Scripture.

It is possible to know what God said and never allow what God said to grieve what is wrong within us. We have mastered biblical information while avoiding spiritual confrontation. But there are moments when the Word of God should disturb us, make us uncomfortable, expose an attitude, confront a habit, uncover an appetite, challenge a motive, and reveal the distance between who we are and who God has called us to become.

That discomfort is not always the enemy attacking you. Sometimes that discomfort is the Holy Spirit awakening you.

Historical Context

The Beatitudes are not random inspirational statements. Jesus is announcing the character of the people who belong to His Kingdom. He begins with people whom society would not normally call blessed: the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Jesus is rebranding blessing. Blessing is not merely having more. Blessing is becoming more like the King. He is teaching that Kingdom blessing is often discovered in conditions the world tries to avoid. The world says, "Blessed are those who never feel pain." Jesus says, "Blessed are those who have learned how to mourn." The world says, "Avoid anything that makes you uncomfortable." Jesus says, "There is a kind of discomfort that leads to transformation."

The word translated mourn carries the idea of deep grief, intense sorrow, or profound lament, not casual disappointment, but the kind of grief normally associated with losing something deeply valuable. Jesus uses strong language because Kingdom transformation requires more than admitting something is wrong. Mourning is what happens when truth is no longer merely something you understand; it becomes something you feel.

E1 Dependence Makes Us Sensitive

Matthew 5:4 cannot be separated from Matthew 5:3. The person who is poor in spirit understands, "I need God." Once I acknowledge that I need God, I also become aware of what life has looked like when I have attempted to live without Him.

Dependence produces sensitivity. When I stop defending myself, I can finally see myself. When I stop pretending I am strong, I become honest about what has been broken. When I acknowledge my need for God, I also become aware of the attitudes, choices, relationships, desires, and habits that have developed outside of God. God-dependence removes the need to keep pretending.

You cannot mourn what you are still committed to defending.

As long as I excuse it, I cannot grieve it. As long as I rename it, I cannot repent of it. As long as I blame everyone else, I cannot experience transformation within myself.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Psalms 139:23–24 NKJV

David is not asking God to search his enemies. David is asking God to search him. That is God-dependence. God-dependent people do not merely ask God to change their circumstances. They ask God to expose their hearts. What have you been defending that God is trying to reveal? What behavior have you renamed so you do not have to confront it? Have you asked God to search you, or only to vindicate you?

E2 Scripture Should Sometimes Feel Heavy

We often want Scripture to inspire us, encourage us, confirm us, and comfort us. But Scripture also corrects us, confronts us, and exposes us. It reveals the difference between our preferences and God's standard. The Word of God is not merely a mirror that shows us what we like; it is a mirror that shows us what is actually there.

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...”
Hebrews 4:12 NKJV

A sword is not designed to entertain. It cuts, separates, and exposes. When Scripture reaches the heart, it can create weight because it reveals what we have learned to overlook.

The weight of Scripture is not meant to destroy you. It is meant to prevent you from remaining unchanged.

There should be moments when Scripture makes us pause, when the sermon is not easy to shout through, when we have to sit with what God has revealed. Not every spiritual moment should be loud. Some of the deepest spiritual moments are silent because God is doing surgery in the soul.

The Danger of Familiarity

We can become so familiar with Scripture that we learn how to admire it without submitting to it. We quote it without obeying it. We underline it without allowing it to examine us. We post it without permitting it to transform us. We say, “That was a good Word,” but never ask, “What must change because of the Word?” When was the last time Scripture changed your mind, or confronted something you wanted to keep? Do you measure a sermon by how encouraged you felt or by how transformed you became?

E3 Mourning Is Not Weakness

Our culture often treats mourning as weakness. We are taught to move on quickly, push through, get over it, and not let anyone see us cry. But Jesus says there is a blessing connected to those who mourn. That means mourning is not the opposite of faith. Sometimes mourning is evidence that faith is alive. You mourn because your heart is still sensitive. You mourn because you have not become numb. You mourn because what grieves God is beginning to grieve you.

Different Expressions of Mourning

We mourn over personal sin and the consequences of our choices. We mourn over broken relationships and injustice. We mourn over the condition of our communities and the spiritual condition of the church. We mourn when God shows us how far our lives have drifted from His intention.

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, these, O God, You will not despise.”
Psalms 51:17 NKJV

God does not reject a broken heart. God rejects a hardened heart. Brokenness is not the end of the believer; it is often where transformation begins.

God cannot heal the version of you that you are determined to hide.

Clarification

Kingdom mourning is not self-hatred, shame, or condemnation rehearsed over and over. Kingdom mourning does not say, “I am worthless.” It says, “This is not who God created me to be, and I cannot remain comfortable here.”

E4 Conviction and Condemnation Are Not the Same

Many believers run from conviction because they confuse it with condemnation. Condemnation pushes you away from God; conviction draws you toward God. Condemnation says, “You are hopeless”; conviction says, “You need help.” Condemnation says, “Hide”; conviction says, “Come closer.” Condemnation identifies you by what you did; conviction reminds you of who God is calling you to become.

“*There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...*”
Romans 8:1 NKJV

The absence of condemnation does not mean the absence of correction. God can correct you without rejecting you, confront you without abandoning you, and reveal what is wrong without declaring that you are beyond restoration.

“*For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.*”
2 Corinthians 7:10 NKJV

There is a sorrow that leads to life. Godly sorrow does not leave us trapped in grief; it moves us toward repentance.

Conviction is not God pushing you away. Conviction is God refusing to leave you where He found you.

When God corrects you, do you hide from Him or move toward Him? Have you confused being confronted with being rejected? Is your sorrow producing change, or merely producing shame?

E5 The Church Must Stop Coddling What God Came to Transform

There is a dangerous form of compassion that comforts people without confronting what is destroying them. The church should be a safe place for broken people, but being safe does not mean remaining unchanged. Grace welcomes us as we are, but grace loves us too much to leave us as we are.

We often excuse sin by saying, “That is just people being people.” But Jesus did not come merely to help people cope with what sin has produced. He came to transform us.

Compassion without truth creates comfort without change.

The church should never shame people, but the church must also never normalize what Jesus died to free people from. We can be patient without becoming permissive, loving without becoming dishonest, and open to people's growth without pretending growth is unnecessary.

“*But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head, Christ.*”

The Church's Responsibility

The church should be a place where people can confess without being condemned, grieve without being rushed, repent without being humiliated, heal without being hidden, and change without being constantly reminded of who they used to be. Have we mistaken acceptance for agreement? Have we become more committed to keeping people comfortable than helping people become whole?

E6 Mourning Unlocks the Comforter

Jesus does not say mourners might be comforted; He says they shall be comforted. The promise is connected to the posture. There is a comfort that can only be experienced when we stop suppressing what must be grieved.

You cannot receive comfort for pain you refuse to acknowledge.

The comfort Jesus promises is not merely emotional relief. The word carries the idea of being called near, strengthened, encouraged, and helped. God does not merely pat us on the back. He comes near. He strengthens. He restores. He gives us what we need to become different.

Connection to the Holy Spirit

“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever.”
John 14:16 NKJV

The Holy Spirit is the Comforter, but the comfort of the Spirit is not always the removal of discomfort. Sometimes the Comforter gives us strength to confront what we have avoided. Sometimes He assures us that repentance will not destroy us, or reminds us that God's correction is evidence of God's love.

The Comforter does not always make the moment easier. Sometimes He makes transformation possible.

E7 What We Mourn Reveals What We Value

People grieve what matters to them. When something has no value to us, its loss produces no sorrow. So the question becomes: what has the ability to grieve us? Do we grieve when our plans fail but not when our character fails? Do we grieve when people disappoint us but not when we disobey God? Do we grieve when we lose an opportunity but not when we lose spiritual sensitivity?

Spiritual maturity is revealed by what has the power to break your heart.

When God begins to transform us, we begin to care about what He cares about. His heart for people becomes our heart for people. His grief over injustice becomes our grief over injustice. Mourning is not only personal; mature believers learn how to mourn beyond themselves.

Practical Application for Today

Do not rush past conviction. Do not immediately distract yourself or drown it out with noise. Sit with God long enough to understand what He is showing you, and name what needs to be grieved. Healing often begins when we stop speaking in generalities: what attitude, habit, compromise, wound, loss, pattern, or relationship needs to be named? What part of your heart has become hardened?

Feeling bad is not the same as changing. Tears alone are not transformation. Godly sorrow must produce movement: repentance means changing the mind, changing direction, and returning to God. After confession, do not remain trapped in condemnation. Receive forgiveness, grace, strength, and the presence of the Holy Spirit. God does not comfort us so we can return unchanged to what broke us. He comforts us so we can walk differently.

**Echo Church, this is who we are becoming. No games. No gimmicks. Just God.
We do not run from conviction, and we do not settle for comfort without change.
We are learning to let the weight of the Word bring us to the God who comforts.**

Declaration Moment

I will not run from conviction. I will not confuse correction with rejection. I will not suppress what God is trying to heal. I will allow the Word to search me. I will allow truth to confront me. I will allow godly sorrow to change me. And I will receive the comfort, strength, and transforming presence of the Holy Spirit.

Quote

“The weight of conviction is not proof that God has left you; it is evidence that He loves you too much to let you remain unchanged.”

Closing Point

Jesus is not celebrating pain for the sake of pain. He is revealing that there is a grief that makes transformation possible. The mourning Jesus blesses is the moment when the heart finally agrees with Heaven.

It is the moment when we stop calling normal what God calls broken. It is the moment when we stop excusing what God is trying to heal, and stop defending what God is trying to deliver us from. It is the moment when Scripture moves from our head into our heart, and we finally feel the weight of what we have known.

When your heart begins to break over what breaks God's heart, transformation has already begun.

Today, the invitation is not to pretend that everything is okay. The invitation is to become honest in the presence of God. Some need to mourn the person they have become, the years they lost, the damage created

by an unhealed wound, the sin they have learned to excuse, or the spiritual sensitivity they have lost. But hear the promise of Jesus: you do not have to suppress it, hide it, or carry it alone.

The comfort is not found in denying the weight. The comfort is found when the weight drives us into the presence of God. What has God revealed that you have refused to grieve? What have you normalized that God desires to transform? Where has your heart become numb? What would change if you stopped resisting the Comforter?

Verse three teaches me that I need God. Verse four teaches me that once I see why I need Him, I should never be comfortable living without Him again.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Do not suppress the weight that is meant to change you; let it drive you into the presence of God.
