

Ignite: Sorrow Leading to Happiness

Objective: By the end of the lesson the student will understand how sorrow can lead to happiness.

Bible Verses:

Matthew 5:1-4

II Corinthians 7:10

Psalms 32:10

Psalms 51:3-4

I John 1:9

I John 1:7

Psalms 51

Romans 8:28

Essential Question? How could mourning lead to happiness? *Teacher Note:* Get the students to address the questions and flip chart their responses.

Opening:

Read Matthew 5:1-4. How is it we can be blessed by mourning?

Teacher Note: Make sure all scriptures are read out loud in the class by student volunteers.

The first thing we need to remember about Matthew 5:4 is Jesus was speaking to his disciples. One man named J. B. Phillips translates this verse as, "How happy are those who know what sorrow means, for they will be given courage and comfort."

Content:

There are two kinds of sorrow we read about in the scriptures. Let's read II Corinthians 7:8-11 to learn more about this. So what we learn from this scripture is being sorrowful about our sins and our carnal nature can lead us to repentance and that will make us happy.

Of course some sorrow can lead to misery. Psalm 32:10 provides us an example of this. It tells us in this scripture that wickedness can cause us sorrow. Without the promises of God being bad can lead to terrible mental consequences.

Notice some other examples that express this. When David acknowledged his sin he was on the road to getting closer to God (Psalm 51:3-4). Think about someone who is involved in drug or alcohol abuse. They may see a friend die from their addiction and this may be the first step in them starting to overcome their problem. The point here is the sorrow over their sin can now put them on the road to true happiness.

Now take note of I John 1:9. When we confess our sins He will forgive them and this knowledge can lead to happiness. We see that I John 1:7 reiterates this same point.

Psalm 51 was written by David after Nathan the prophet had confronted David about his sin relating to Bathsheba and her husband. Do you see the mournfulness David expresses now that he has recognized his sin?

Finally notice what we read in Romans 8:28. Anything can be turned into good by God if we meditate on what we can learn from the situation. How do you think this is possible?

Tell them this story to explain: On the Pennsylvania Railroad in the early 1900s two trains collided killing several people. It was determined the surviving engineer was at fault. He was questioned repeatedly and the situation became too much for him. He was driven into a psychotic state and could barely carry on a conversation.

The president of the railroad asked to meet with the engineer. He placed his arms around his shoulders and told the engineer, "Old man, we have had a streak of bad luck haven't we." Both men stood together weeping.

Then the president told him, "One thing I want you to remember as long as you work for us is that whenever any employee of this railroad is troubled, I am troubled." Soon the old engineer began to think and speak clearly again. Because his boss cared enough for him to grieve with him, he was healed.

Many people are out to find fault with people. Christ is not one of those. When we take the time to mourn even with those who are to blame we become more Christ like.

Independent Practice:

Have the students break into groups and discuss something they have mourned over. How did this help them grow and lead to later happiness in their life? Have some of the students report back to the whole class.

Close/Reflect

What final comments or questions does anyone want to share on this topic?

Sources: The Zondervan 2000 Pastor's Annual, by T.T. Crabtree, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999).

