

The Beatitudes

Blessed Are Those Who Mourn

Ready (*Plant the seed*)

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. –Matthew 5:4

Set (*Get the conversation started*)

To mourn means to be sad. Not just regular sadness; deep sadness coming from loss. Most of the time it is associated with death but we can apply it to anything that you have lost: a pet, a favorite item or when a friend moves away. It is the loss of something you can't get back; something that you will miss so much. In the second Beatitude, Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn," but why would someone be blessed when feeling such sadness? Well, when we truly mourn something, there really isn't anything on Earth that can help. So, we have to go to the only one who can: God! Deep mourning takes us to prayer and strengthens our relationship with God. It is about relying on Him as the only one who can help you.

As an athlete, you will not mourn like you will when you lose a loved one, but you will find yourself in need of comfort. When you are feeling frustrated trying to learn something new or master a skill or when you lose a big game, you can go to God's word for comfort. 2 Chronicles says, "be strong and don't give up, for your work will be rewarded." When you are feeling angry in defeat you can go to God's word for comfort.

Grow (*Talk it over*)

- Have you ever felt grief or been in mourning? What helped you?
- How does going to God's word comfort you?
- What can your behavior during these difficult times show others- especially those who don't know God?

Pray

Father God, thank you for sending Jesus to teach us righteousness and show us the way to have a blessed life through the beatitudes. We know that you are always with us, especially when we are mourning. Thank you for your word that comforts us when we are hurting. Help us to show others that your love can comfort them, too. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Overtime (*Team Building Game to Support Concept*) Fisherman Tag

Say: When you lean on God for comfort, it strengthens you. In this game, we will have a Fisherman who is the tagger. The rest of you will be fish. When the fisherman tags you, you must get behind him and hang onto his shoulder with one hand. You cannot let go for the rest of the game. You may use your other hand to help tag other fish. Fisherman, communicate with your fish to be most effective in tagging once you have a long line of fish helping you out.

You may need to square off an area so the game doesn't spread out too wide. Let them play until all the fish have been tagged.

Say: Great job fisherman! Did you get stronger as you added fish? How did effective communication help? That's just like how communicating with God through prayer and reading the Bible help strengthen us as we work through difficult times. You will get stronger the more time you spend with Him. Great job!