

FAMILY PAGE: BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN

FAMILY QUESTION: IS IT SAFE TO CRY?

Jesus speaks to people who mourn (or cry) and praises them. Tears are a way to connect with God and others, and crying helps our bodies to feel better. Offering our hands, hearts, listening ears, and words to another can be the tangible comfort of God. How do members in your family express sadness? Do you feel comfortable crying? Is it okay to cry? Talk together about times that you have cried, even if it was uncomfortable. Then take a small jam jar and fill it with water. Each time someone in your family experiences grief or sadness, add a bit of salt to the water in the jar. This is a reminder of how God holds our tears (Psalm 56:8—"You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle.") Let this jar and saltwater (exactly what our tears are made of!) be a reminder of how God holds us in our sadness. *(Idea based on a post from Sarah Bessey: <https://bit.ly/2DVx0Yg>)*

BRIEF REFLECTION

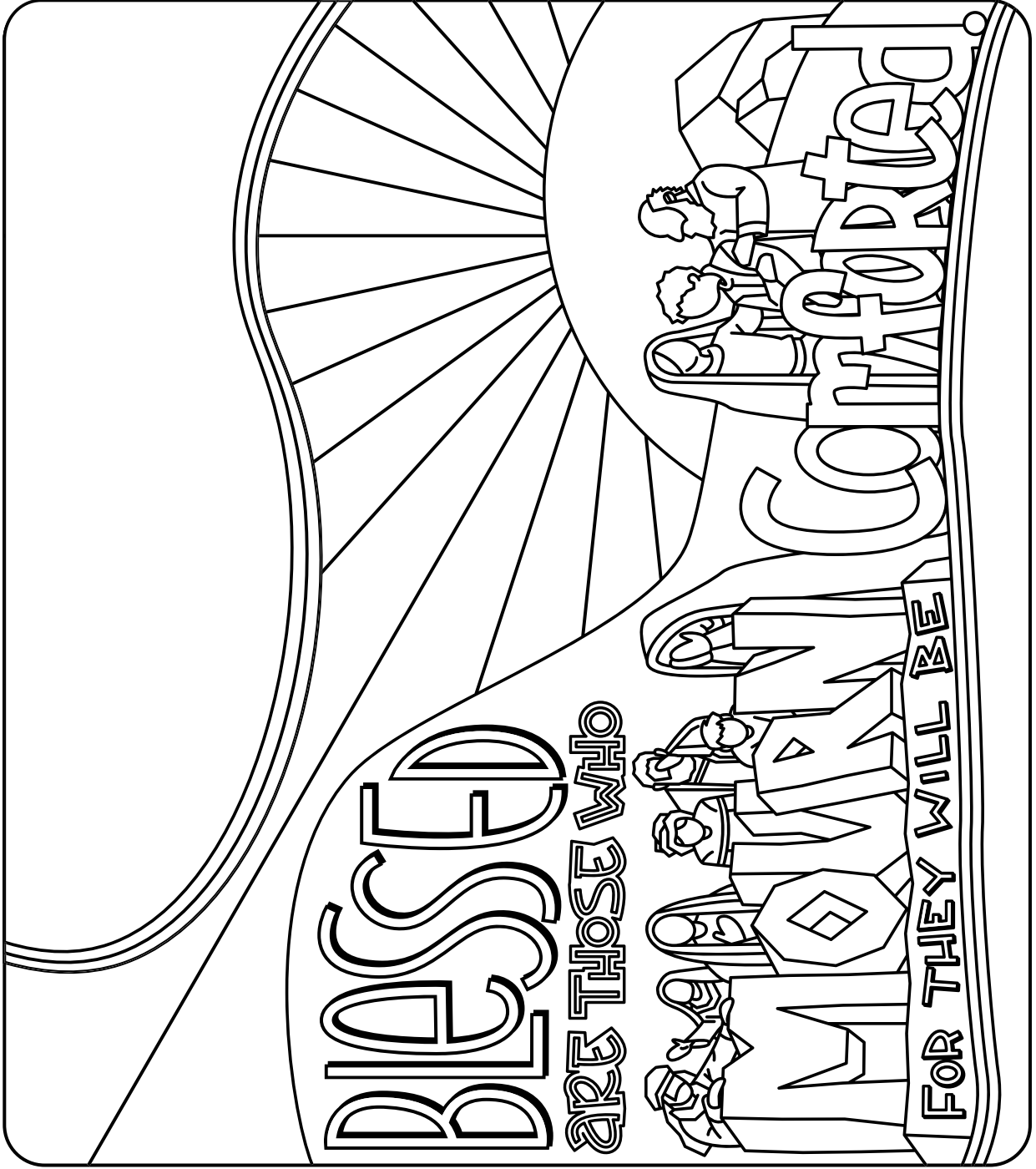
There is a huge crowd of people following Jesus. He sees their hurts and pains and cares for them in many ways. He leads them to a mountain and tells them about God's kingdom. You can think of a "kingdom" as the way the world works or is set up. In God's kingdom, there is abundance: more than enough honor, food, money, love, power, and resources for everyone to thrive.

Jesus says, "*Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.*" There were people in Jesus' time, just like today, who were taught crying was a shameful thing to do. They believed mourning showed weakness and was too vulnerable. Many of the rich and powerful people spent their time trying not to cry. They focused on gathering money and control to feel strong and unshakeable. In this promise, Jesus speaks to people who mourn (or cry) and praises them. Why do you think he did this? Why do you think people cry? Crying shows we are alive, awake, aware. Crying shows we are brave. Crying shows we are willing to feel pain—our own and someone else's pain. You're not trying to block the pain around you or keep your distance from it. Tears and crying are important. Especially when what makes us cry is painful or hard to hold. It's also a beautiful way we connect with God. God's heart is wide and holds all the pain of everyone hurting throughout the whole world. And when we cry, it's a way of sharing in God's heart.

Jesus promises here that God will comfort us when we cry. And Jesus promised God would bring comfort and make things right for all the people listening who faced injustice, shame, and poverty which caused them to cry and grieve. One way God brings comfort is through you. (*Hold your hands out with palms up.*) When you offer your hand or loving words—especially to someone who is sad—you are God's comfort to that person. Crying together and being vulnerable always helps us belong with each other. And it brings us close to God.

PRAYER

Comforting God, Thank you for our tears and how they teach us, free us, and connect us to you. Thank you for holding the pain that makes us cry, and for crying with us. Please use us to be your comfort to someone this week. Amen.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share about a time you cried.
What happened?

How did you feel after you cried?

How can you be God's comfort to
someone this week?

*In the coloring page's blank space, write or
draw what this beatitude looks like or means
to you, or write or draw a modern-day
version of the beatitude.*