

Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are the Meek,” part 3

Matthew 5:5 – “Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth!”

INTRODUCTION

- To begin with let’s get back to speed in the conversation about the Sermon on the Mount.
- The S.O.M. is considered the “Manifesto of the King.”
- It is the Christian Magna Charta which describes both the attitude and disposition, as well as the way life is to be lived by the Citizens of the New Kingdom of Heaven, who have immigrated from the Kingdom of the World.
- The disposition and actions taught by Jesus in the message are **rooted in love not law**.
- The practices are based on relationship not duty.
- The Sermon on the Mount outlines in detail and depth:
 - The quality of the citizens
 - The function of the citizens
 - The motives of the citizens of God’s new world order
- **And** above all the Sermon on the Mt teachings by King Jesus is only possible in the deeper understanding of the Spirit Endowed Life which is continually under construction by the Spirit of God Working in us.

- So progress toward the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle is only supernaturally imparted to the surrendered – yielded follower of Jesus and who continually says, “**Lord, I want to be like you, to live for honoring your name and I am willing for you to do whatever it takes.**”

NOW – let’s get into this principle: “Blessed are the Meek for they shall inherit the earth.”

I. First – let me give you a broad and general definition of Meekness

1. Simply stated – meekness is strength under control.
2. Contrary to general English language usage, **meekness is not weakness!**
3. Meekness is harnessing the passions and dispositions of the heart and clothing them with a gentle spirit.
4. Vines Dictionary of Biblical Words defines meekness as:
“The fruit of power” which has the infinite resources of God at its command.”
5. Meekness is closely aligned with “Gentleness” and “self-control” which of course is “The fruit of the Spirit” (Gal 5:22)
6. Therefore meekness – gentleness – self-control is produced supernaturally by the Holy Spirit.

7. Defined negatively meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest – meekness is not preoccupied with self – at all – but rather completely occupied with God and others.
8. Meekness is the opposite of:

- Arrogance
- Pride
- Ego
- Self-exaltation
- Haughtiness
- Self-will

“Meekness is not weakness but strength under the control of the Spirit.”

Meekness forgets about self and concentrates all its energy on Trusting God and putting others before our self-agenda and that takes tremendous strength!

II. Second – let’s dig deeper

1. This beatitude is a direct quote from Psalm 37:11 – “But the Meek will inherit the Land and enjoy peace.”
2. Understood in its broader context God describes the meek person in at least four ways.

A Portrait of the Meek

So let's try to put all this together into a portrait of the meek.

1. They Trust in God

- Meek people begin by trusting God (verse 5b).
- They believe that he will work for them and vindicate them when others oppose them.
- **Biblical meekness is rooted in the deep confidence that God is for you and not against you.**

2. They Commit Their Way to God

- Next, meek people commit their way to the Lord (verse 5a).
- The Hebrew word for "commit" means literally to "roll."
- Meek people have discovered that God is trustworthy, and so they roll their "way"—their business, their problems, their relationships, their health, their fears, their frustrations—they roll all this onto the Lord.
- They admit that they are insufficient to cope with the complexities and pressures and obstacles of life, and they trust that God is able and willing to sustain them and guide them and protect them.

3. They Are Quiet before God and Wait for Him

- Next, according to verse 7a, meek people are quiet or still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.
- First, they discover that God can be trusted.
- Then, second, they commit their way to him.
- And then, third, they wait patiently in stillness for the work of God in their lives.
- This doesn't mean they become lazy. It means that they're free of frenzy.
- They have a kind of steady calm that comes from knowing that God is omnipotent, that he has their affairs under his control, and that he is gracious and will work things out for the best.
- Meek people have a quiet steadiness about their lives in the midst of upheaval.

4. They Don't Fret over the Wicked

- And so the fourth thing about them (in verse 7b) is that they don't fret themselves over the wicked who prosper in their way.
- Or, as verse 8 says, they refrain from anger.
- Their family and work and life are in God's sovereign hands; they trust him; they wait patiently and quietly to see how his power and goodness will work things out; and so the

setbacks and obstacles and opponents of life do not produce the kind of bitterness and anger and fretfulness that is so common among men.

So the portrait we have of meekness so far, based on the closest biblical parallel (in Psalm 37:11) to the third beatitude, is **that it begins by trusting God.**

- Then it commits its way to the Lord in the confidence that he will use his power and mercy to do good for us.
- Then it waits patiently and quietly for the outcome.
- And, finally, it does not give way to anger and fretfulness when faced with opposition and setbacks.

- So it is clear already, in this preliminary sketch from Psalm 37, that meekness has very much to do with God.

- It consists in a peaceful freedom from fretful anger and is based on trusting God and rolling all our ways onto God and waiting patiently for God. Meekness has very much to do with God.

- So you see – the Meek person is strong because He trusts in God and therefore is totally preoccupied with the Lord's ways.

Illustration – Elephants



- **Elephants are so strong they are frequently used in India for logging – to carry large logs and even uproot trees.**
- **But these giants are usually gentle, especially when tamed from a young age.**
- **The elephant's trunk in particular is an example of strength coupled with precise control.**
- **It's trunk, with more than 40,000 muscles is strong enough to rip branches from trees but sensitive enough to pick up a single blade of grass**

- The elephant illustrates the great value of having both strength and careful gentleness – unlike the proverbial “bull in the china closet.”
- In order to be meek – like the elephant – we too must be tamed and trained!
- By the grace of God we too can be “GENTLE GIANTS” in the Spirit.

III. Thirdly, let’s look at an example from the Bible that is referred to as Meek.

The Meekness of Moses

Numbers 12:1–4 describes an occasion when Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses severely.

- Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman; and they said, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" **And the Lord heard it.** Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all men that was on the face of the earth. And suddenly the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting."

- What happens in the following verses is that the Lord rebukes Miriam and Aaron and vindicates his servant Moses.

Meekness between Opposition and Vindication

- Now what is the point of calling Moses meek right here in this context—right between bitter opposition and God's vindication?
- I think the point is that meekness means committing your cause to God and not needing to defend yourself.
- Just where we would expect the text to tell us what Moses said to justify himself against the charge of Miriam and Aaron, the text says he was the meekest man on the earth.
- Moses doesn't say a word.
- Instead he waits patiently for the Lord.
- He frets not over these critical words. And God comes to his defense.

Meekness Refrains from Revenge and Defensiveness

- So we can add to our portrait of meekness this: not only does it trust God, and commit its way to God, and wait patiently for God, and refrain from anger; it also refrains from revenge and defensiveness.

- Meekness loves to give place to wrath and leave its vindication with God.
- Meekness is the power to absorb adversity and criticism without lashing back!

Now, let's observe a modern day saint – Dawn Percival

Dawn Percival was a picture of meekness – Strength under control of the Holy Spirit!

Commemorative Speech at her funeral service.

Dawn touched our lives in an extraordinary manner.

I have known few women or men who are so full of faith, love, joy, peace; who have graced as many lives as Dawn.

- Dawn loved sacrificially
- She cared immensely
- She shared generously
- She laughed infectiously
- She served joyfully
- She spoke gracefully and truthfully.
- She worshipped Jesus with her whole heart

In short...Dawn Percival was a vessel God used to make His presence real in a complex world of suffering, confusion, brokenness, and sin.

Dawn's life was an outward and visible sign of God's grace...

In fact she was so grace-full that when you encountered Dawn, you encountered the Lord; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

- We never worship the sacrament; we love and worship the One it points to...Jesus
- Dawn would be embarrassed to think this service was just about her...she always pointed beyond herself to Jesus!

1. Judy Graham – president of Celebration

“Dawn loved the UMC and was a strong supporter of renewal and revival in her beloved church. She didn't need to be in the limelight, but was a powerful prayer warrior and accomplished much in the spirit realm. She was a vessel of gold used by God for His purpose. We will miss her.”

2. Betty Janke – former member of Aldersgate

As I think of Dawn her very name is synonymous with Faithful One. Perhaps I should say, “Faith Full One”. She was as faithful just as each dawn of day comes, so she was faithful to honor our Lord and carry us all to Him in prayer. Never have I known one more faithful to intercede for each of us. I will forever be thankful for Dawn and oh how we shall all miss her.

I had the privilege of knowing Dawn from the early 1970's till the present. We served together in Aglow. She made my job so easy. She was president and I was her vice president. I told everyone all I had to do was pray that she would be there and she always was. She was a woman of commitment. Faithful to do what the Lord called her to do and she did it well.

In the 1980's and 90's I was blessed to worship at Aldersgate as did Dawn. We served together again with her as president for a time of the women's organization and I was her vice president. I attended her Sunday School at times and was always blessed by the Godly wisdom and love that she demonstrated. She was a little package but she carried huge amounts of specialness that only God could produce through the Holy Spirit.

3. Debra Duffee – member of Aldersgate

“Whenever I was around Dawn I experienced God's love through her. She didn't just “talk the talk” she “walked the walk.” She was a perfect example of living faithfully for God every day. What a wonderful example of Christ she has been in my life and I hold her up as an example of how I should live my life for Christ.

Dawn Percival graced our lives and hundred's more. She pointed beyond herself to the One Lord Jesus Christ...

All who knew and loved Dawn Percival would join me in affirming her as the epitome of Meekness – Power and Strength hidden in humility and gentleness!

The Full Portrait of Biblical Meekness

Now let's stand back and see if we can see the portrait whole.

- Meekness begins when we put our trust in God.
- Then, because we trust him, we commit our way to him.

- We roll onto him our anxieties, or frustrations, our plans, our relationships, our jobs, our health.
- And then we wait patiently for the Lord.
- We trust his timing and his power and his grace to work things out in the best way for his glory and for our good.
- The result of trusting God and the rolling of our anxieties onto God and waiting patiently for God is that we don't give way to quick and fretful anger.
- But instead, like Moses we give place to wrath and hand our cause over to God and let him vindicate us if he chooses.
- And then, as James says, in this quiet confidence we are slow to speak and quick to listen.
- We become reasonable and open to correction.
- Meekness loves to learn. And it counts the blows of a friend as precious.
- And when it must say a critical word to a person caught in sin or error, it speaks from the deep conviction of its own fallibility and its own susceptibility to sin and its utter dependence on the grace of God.

Meekness begins with God and ends with God.

And therefore whenever we see a person like that, we give God the glory and the aim of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount is fulfilled.

IV. Last, let us consider what it means to “inherit the earth.”

Quotes from notables:

R.T. Kendall

You get the whole world thrown in! Wow, we are to achieve an inheritance! Everything that belongs to Jesus belongs to us. Not just wealth, or castles, or becoming a billionaire...we get the whole world! It all belongs to God and He gives it all to us because we are joint heirs with Christ!

Lloyd Ogilvie

“To inherit the earth means to receive and enjoy the deepest satisfaction from God’s created order.” It means the meek will live in the land and live in harmony with God, with community and with nature, not by grabbing, dominating, controlling, or by force, but by gentleness, cooperation, reconciliation, humility, forgiveness and yes, love.”

John Calvin

“We will inherit the whole earth with thankful free and open hearts and we will enjoy the good things which God in his goodness provides for us here. We are assured too that we will always be at peace, whatever troubles we are in.”

John Wesley

“God takes peculiar care to provide the meek with all things needful for life and godliness; he secures to them the provision he has made, inspite of the force, the fraud, or malice of men...He gives the meek richly to enjoy!”

Finally brethren, let me make some final suggestions and applications:

How are we to cultivate Meekness:

- **Meekness is a fruit of the Spirit and fruit is developed by abiding in the true vine!**
- **Jesus said, “Abide me and I will abide in you and you will bear much fruit.”**
- **Fruit is cultivated, not by striving, but by yielding, clinging, resting, in the Spirit’s call, discernment and leadership.**
- **The quickest way to change is to change behaviors by intentionally developing new habits and changing small behaviors until they stick.**

Examples:

- 1) **Speak as little as possible about yourself**
- 2) **Mind your own business rather than meddle in others affairs**

- 3) Avoid curiosity that leads to gossip
- 4) Accept contradiction and correction cheerfully
- 5) Accept insults and injuries gracefully
- 6) Accept being slighted, forgotten, and disliked
- 7) Do not seek to be specially loved and admired
- 8) Be kind and gentle when provoked
- 9) Practice yielding in discussion even though you might be right
- 10) Choose to always exalt God and give him the credit rather than trying the credit for yourself.
- 11) Choose to honor others before you seek to honor yourself.

Those who have immigrated from the Kingdom of the World to the Kingdom of Christ are meek and gentle; they are the ones who are controlled by the Holy Spirit and therefore demonstrate incredible strength!

Prayer

