

The Power of Meekness

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Psalm 37:1-11, 22, 28-34

James 3:13-18

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:5 ESV)

Let me say this again, the beatitudes are not things you do so that you can become a “happy” person. They are not a checklist to accomplish. They are not teachings about behaving properly. No, these teachings are an **invitation to become members in the Kingdom of God**. These are teachings **of seeking first His kingdom** and **His righteousness** and all things will come after that...all things.

Jesus is teaching us how to live a new life where God, the triune God, God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit will be glorified. Those teachings will not be very popular. As my pastor friend put it: **“living right-side up in an upside-down world.”**

So far we focused on the two beatitudes: The Poor in Spirit and the Mourners. There is a continuity. It all starts with being poor in the spirit. **The poor in spirit are the ones who have realized they are no one if they are not part of the Kingdom of Heaven. “I need God, I surrender”. Once you are there, you see your sins and the sins of the world around you and you mourn for them and ask for forgiveness; this leads you to be meek.**

What is meaning of meek?

I will look to two passages from the Bible: Psalm 37 and James 3.

Psalm 37

Jesus used the first part of verse (v11): **“But the meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace.” (Psalm 37:11 ESV)**

David gives another explanation for ones who will inherit the land (v9). **“For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land.”** (Psalm 37:9 ESV)

If we look back into the Psalm, we will understand what kind of people the meek are. **“Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him,** and he will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. **Be still before the LORD** and **wait patiently** for him; **fret not yourself over the one** who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices! **Refrain from anger,** and forsake wrath! **Fret not yourself;** it tends only to evil.” (Psalm 37:5-8)

The people who are meek have learned to commit themselves to God; they have learned that God is trustworthy; He keeps His promises in HIS TIME. That is why they wait for the Lord. “Be still and know I am God,” says David. They have learned to restrain themselves and not take revenge; they are not jealous when they see wicked ones being prosperous. They refrain from anger. Their life is in God’s sovereign hands; they trust Him and wait patiently to see how God’s goodness will work out.

Are such people weak or truly powerful?

Let us clarify one thing. **Meekness is a choice. It is not being a doormat;** գլուխդ ծռած, վիզդ վար կը քալես: It is not being someone who says yes to everything, every insult, every abuse...NO.

The word meekness in Greek is *Praotes*. Aristotle saw it as the happy medium between too much and too little anger. William Barclay translates this word: **“Blessed is the person who is always angry at the right time and never angry at the wrong time.”**¹

Another meaning one can find in Greek language for meek, *Praus*. **“It is the regular word for an animal which has been domesticated.”**²

Please notice: the meek person is not a doormat, or someone who allows others to walk all over them. NO, NO, NO

Meekness is a powerful behavior. It is a choice of being restrained, to put your anger in control. **I will say a God-controlled personality.**

In his letter, Brother James speaks about anger. **“Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;”** (James 1:19ESV)

Oh how much we need to restrain our tongue. How much we need to be more open to hear, to listen, and slow to speak and to not answer immediately.

James speaks about wisdom, not any wisdom, but wisdom from above. In the beginning of his letter he says:

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. James 1:5(ESV)

We all pray for different things. Asking God and praying daily for wisdom is a biblical command. **God gives us wisdom from above**, and it is not a worldly wisdom. James describes wisdom from above. And we find a correlation between wisdom and meekness:

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. James 3:13 (ESV)

Why people who received wisdom from above are meek?

In verse 17 James answers:

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. (James 3:17 ESV)

John Piper adds: “The reason the truly wise person is also the truly meek person is that true wisdom is peaceable, gentle, and open to reason. But these are the marks of meekness! Isn't it remarkable that the marks of biblical wisdom and biblical meekness are the same?”

Wisdom in the Bible is never a merely intellectual affair. It is a disposition of the heart as well as ideas in the head. And therefore, in a sense, meekness and wisdom are one thing. They are both peaceable, gentle, and open to reason.”³

Oh how wonderful it is when you can have a council meeting, a deacons meeting, or a congregational meeting in the church and when we seek God’s reason, God’s wisdom, God’s will, God’s guidance. Therefore we learn to listen, TO LISTEN...

So, my prayer is seek ye first the kingdom of God. Seek ye first the wisdom that comes from above. Seek ye first what God is saying, seek ye first what glorifies our heavenly Father. (marks of wisdom from above):

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. (James 3:17 ESV)

I stopped a minute when I was witting my sermon. I literally stopped and asked myself. Am I seeking His wisdom, which has the same signs of meekness?

Two people in the Bible are example of meekness: Moses and Jesus.

-Moses did not open his mouth when Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses severely (marrying a woman they did not approve) (Numbers 12:1-4). What happens in the following verses is that the Lord rebukes Miriam and Aaron and vindicates his servant Moses. **Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth.** (Numbers 12:3 ESV)

-Jesus is a great example of meekness: Jesus said about himself:

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle *praos* (meek) and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (Matthew 11:29 ESV)

He is indeed. Jesus knew when to speak, when to be silent.

“...they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.” (1 Pet 2:23)

Jesus' crucifixion and sacrifice is not weakness; it is the power of God acting in love to save humanity. A great example of meekness we see in Jesus.

Second part of the blessed: **Those will inherit the earth**

To whom does the earth belong?

The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, (Psalm 24:1ESV)

For "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." (1 Corinthians 10:26ESV)

The prerequisite of beatitude is to enter His Kingdom first. **Once we are part of His kingdom, we are adopted by God.** Adoption is one of the most powerful images that we have in scripture to describe our relationship to God. **He has adopted us into His family, and everything He has is ours as well** (Rom 8:15, 1 Cor. 3:22).

We enter poor in Spirit, grieving for our sins, which leads us to be meek, in a God-controlled life and seeking wisdom from above.

The earth is more than the land that we live. The meek will inherit the earth; they will be in the kingdom of God. So if we know we inherited everything in this land, who cares how big is our house? Who cares what kind of car one will drive? **What difference that will make if you know eventually we are heirs of God.** I think only the meek can see what is important and what is not important. Only the meek, God-controlled persons can see waiting for the Lord, patiently, in prayer will inherit the world.

How about Handel's Messiah:

the meek really believe the Hallelujah chorus.

- i. *For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*
- ii. *The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord*
- iii. *And He shall reign forever and ever!*

Application:

Illustration 1:

I watched a movie with my family called ***Hidden Figures***. "The incredible untold story of Katherine G. Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson - brilliant African-American women working at NASA, who served as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit, a stunning achievement that restored the nation's confidence, turned around the Space Race, and galvanized the world. The visionary trio crossed all gender and race lines to inspire generations to dream big."⁴

A good example of being meek. Their behavior was Christ-like. Three of them were insulted, many times. But that did not stop them from doing their job, doing their best, acting wisely and saying the right words at the right time expressing anger at the right time.

Illustration 2

The Titanic was built in Belfast, Ireland. At the time it sank an American preacher was in the city of Belfast holding services in the church where many of the men who worked on this project had attended. They had termed the **Titanic the "ship that couldn't sink"** or the **"unsinkable ship!"** When news came that it had sunk and with it at least 16 members of this church had perished, a service at the church was called. All the dignitaries of the area were there, the mayor, the noblemen, the lords, the bishops, and ministers of every denomination. In the audience were many newspaper men and the newly made widows and crying orphans. This American preacher stood to preach and announced his sermon as **"the unsinkable ship."** He did not however refer to the Titanic. His text was the story of Jesus in the little boat that was about to be destroyed by the storm as Jesus slept in the bow of the ship and the fretting disciples over their impending doom, until Jesus reminded them that as long as he was on board they should not fear that they could sink. He quieted the storm and their hearts!

How different was this humble little boat. It was more secure than the Titanic in all its human greatness because Christ was on board. They did not have to fear anything. No human power can destroy the meek! -- *Source unknown*

In our world, the meek don't inherit anything, it seems to me! But, then again, Jesus constantly reminds us, does he not, that things aren't always as they seem to be. After all Jesus will go on to tell us:

- Last is first
- Giving is receiving
- Dying is living
- Losing is finding
- Least is greatest
- And on it goes.

Jesus switches the price tags on the value of almost everything.⁵

“living right-side up in an upside- down world.”

How about you? How are you doing today?

Do any of these everyday situations happen to you?

- you're attacked at work
- someone cuts you off in traffic
- someone else gets a promotion
- you get criticized
- someone gets to go on vacation on not you

Blessed are the meek, the ones who trust God, the ones who makes a choice to give the control to God, the ones who listen, wait for the lord, who are not envious and jealous, the ones who restrain their tongue, the ones who know to are only angry at the right time for right cause.

1. William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible, Matthew* P 96

2. *ibid*

3. John Piper, *Blessed are the Meek* Feb 6, 1986

4. www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#safe=active&q=hidden+figures

5. Shawn Reese, *The Blessed Meek*, PBCC