

"Blessed Are The Meek"

Introduction. In our study of the beatitudes, it is so interesting to observe how they teach principles that are so unlike the world! This specific beatitude promises that those who are gentle or meek will inherit the earth. World conquest given to the gentle, of all people! The world thinks in terms of strength, ability, self-assurance, and aggressiveness. The more you assert yourself and express yourself, the more you organize and manifest your powers and ability, the more likely you are to succeed.

But the Christian is completely different -- he is a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). This beatitude must have come as a great shock to the Jews of our Lord's day. They had ideas of a grand, materialistic kingdom, and to them the Messiah was one who was going to lead them to victory. But Jesus said, "No, that is not the way. My kingdom is not like that."

There is an obvious, logical connection between these beatitudes. They are not spoken haphazardly. Being poor in spirit is the fundamental condition that leads in turn to a condition of mourning as we become aware of our sins; and that in turn leads to meekness. Also, these beatitudes become increasingly difficult, searching, and humbling. When we compare our own utter nothingness and helplessness with the love of God and the demands of the gospel, we become poor in spirit. Then we become aware of the sin and evil that drags us down. This leads to submissiveness toward God.

I. "**Blessed Are The Meek**"

- A. There is a slight problem in understanding the word "meek" or "gentle" because the word cannot be expressed well in English.
 - 1. R. C. Trench describes meekness as "the temper of spirit which accepts God's dealings with us as good, and therefore without resistance or disputing; and it is closely linked with humility because only the humble heart is the meek heart."
 - 2. Put in the simplest terms, meekness is submissiveness to the will of God. The Greeks appropriately used this word for an animal which had been domesticated and trained to obey its master (cf. Ruth 1:16).
- B. Aristotle defined meekness as standing between excessive anger and excessive angerless-ness. It is true composure, i.e., the ability to be angry at the right time and never angry at the wrong time.
 - 1. Meekness is not mere gentleness or an outward expression of laziness. It is not one who is flabby or who will compromise. It is also not mere modesty or the absence of pretension.
 - 2. Meekness is the attitude of people who know their own spiritual poverty. To be meek is not to be confused with being servile. To be

meek is to have strength reigned in. Those who are meek are eager to let God take the steering wheel.

C. Meekness does have several characteristics in the Bible.

1. It makes one safe in the day of anger (Zephaniah 2:3).
2. It is associated with humility or lowliness (Ephesians 4:2).
3. It is expressed in consideration of others (Titus 3:2).
4. It has a soothing effect on everyone (1 Thessalonians 2:7).
5. It is an ornament in the sight of God (1 Peter 3:4).

D. Meekness demands a duty toward God and man.

1. Meekness toward God (Job 1:21; Luke 1:37; Galatians 2:20).
2. Meekness toward man (Titus 3:1-2).
 - a) The individual who is meek feels anger for the right reasons, against the right persons, in the right manner, at the right moment, and for the right length of time (Ephesians 4:26-27).
 - b) Meekness is not apathy or insensibility to wrong (Acts 17:16). The meek Christian feels anger concerning wrongdoing, but he does not allow it to degenerate into hatred and cause him to sin against wrongdoers.
 - c) It is a willingness to take wrong patiently (1 Peter 2:19-20), and to deal patiently with others (1 Corinthians 4:21; Galatians 6:1; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; 1 Peter 3:15). This is a person who could "go the second mile" and "be defrauded" without retaliating (Matthew 5:41; 1 Corinthians 6:7). Unfortunately, people today are more concerned about their rights than they are about their duty.

E. Meekness is exemplified in the lives of three great Bible characters.

1. Moses.
 - a) He was called "meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Numbers 12:3). He had a lowly conception of himself.
 - b) He was a man who had wonderful possibilities ahead of him but he saw through it all and humbled himself to do God's will. He was able to walk up to the most powerful king in the world and demand freedom, and unleash furor against the rebellious Israelites (Exodus 5:1; 32:15-28).
2. Christ.
 - a) His meekness is demonstrated in every aspect of His life (Matthew 11:29; 12:20; 26:52-53; Philippians 2:8).
 - b) Jesus could be the King of peace and a tender forgiver of the woman caught in adultery (Matthew 21:5; John 8:1-11), while at the same time, without changing His nature, cleanse the temple because the people were disrespecting God (John 2:13-17).

- c) His greatest meekness is demonstrated in His obedience to his Father even to the point of death (John 8:29).
- 3. Lydia.
 - a) She put herself in subjection to the only law she knew. Her heart was opened and she heard the gospel.
 - b) She attended to the truth she heard, and was baptized without hesitation. She was judged as a faithful Christian (Acts 16:13-15).
- F. It is easy to see how this inevitably follows being poor in spirit and mourning. A Christian can never be gentle or meek unless they are poor in spirit. A Christian can never be gentle or meek unless they see themselves as sinners. The meek man does not glory in himself. The meek man does not make demands for his position, privileges, possessions, and status in life.

II. ***“For They Shall Inherit The Earth”***

- A. This promise is taken from Psalm 37:9, 11, 29 and undoubtedly has a reference to an expression used by the Jews.
 - 1. The Jews were promised the land of Canaan, and they considered Canaan as a type of heaven. To “inherit the land” became, then, an expression designating the blessings under the Messiah (Genesis 15:7-8; Exodus 32:13; Deuteronomy 19:14).
 - 2. In the time of Jesus, this expression was used to denote any great blessing, perhaps even the sum of all blessings (Isaiah 60:21).
- B. Jesus did not use it in the sense of owning great sums of property, but that they would possess specific blessings. When Jesus promised to “inherit the earth,” He meant that the meek shall be received into His kingdom and partake of its blessings here and of the glories of the heavenly Canaan after this life is over (Romans 8:17).
- C. Even now, a Christian has untold resources at his or her disposal (Mark 10:29-30). When all the members of God’s church are willing to share their possessions with one another when there is need, every Christian has already inherited a vast fortune (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35; 11:27-30).
- D. A spirit of meekness enables us to get so much enjoyment out of life itself, whether our portion is large or small. Contentment is one of the spirits of meekness (Proverbs 15:16). The humble and meek Christian is far happier in a small home than the wicked in their palace (1 Corinthians 3:21-22; 2 Corinthians 6:4-10).

Conclusion. The meek are under the control and restraint of God. They are submissive and concerned about doing His will. The life of the meek is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest. We can never

make ourselves meek. Nothing but the power of God, which is obtained by receiving the implanted word meekly (James 1:21), can make us poor in spirit, mourners, and meek.

This is a very serious matter. Those who claim to be Christians have to be meek because we have no excuse. It is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:23). We pray that you will see the blessedness attached to being a child of God. Even though being a Christian calls you to act different from the world, these attributes make you one who is truly to be congratulated. If you are here and you want to respond to the gospel, come now.