

The Beatitudes: The Meek

When I am meek, I am blessed.



The Transformation for Adult LifeGroups

Matthew 5:5

June 23, 2019

TODAY'S TEXT

Text: **Matthew 5:5**

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

FIRST THOUGHTS

Is meekness usually considered a positive trait or a negative trait? Why?

Do you think you need more meekness or less?

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Meekness was not a respected trait in ancient times (as is often true today). The Ancient World was a harsh and brutal one where strength, not mercy, was valued. Conquering armies routinely practiced rape, genocide, torture, and slavery. Women and children were often the target of violence and exploitation. We may think of the Roman Empire spreading peace and prosperity, but in reality violence was the means by which expansion was accomplished. Just look at the entertainments of the Romans (and many others in ancient times): public executions, gladiators, animals combat, etc. Strength was meant to be displayed, not restrained. The Jews of Jesus' time were submissive to the authorities in Rome as a conquered people. They didn't want a meek Messiah, but one who would come in power and strength and set them free. But Jesus would show them true freedom comes only in submission to God.

Into this world came Jesus Christ teaching a way of submission and restraint that was revolutionary. His commands like "love your enemies" have become so familiar to us that we forget the shock they created in the 1st Century. Even in Israel, the prevailing philosophy was an eye for an eye. But Jesus message of forgiveness was new and strikingly different.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

So what is Meekness?

- Read Matthew 5:5
- It may be easier to begin with what meekness is NOT. Meekness is not weakness. It is not about being mild or a doormat. We may think of a quiet, hand-wringing, spineless person when we think about meekness. But that is not the picture presented in Scripture.
- Meekness is all about control. Specifically, it is about strength under control.
- So meekness is about us submitting our power, our willfulness, our lives to Christ our Lord.
- How does this change your perspective on meekness? How does being meek flow out of being poor in spirit and mourning our sin from the last two lessons?

Meekness is submitting to 3 things

- Submitting to God's Word
 - Read James 1:19-22—*"Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls. But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves."*
 - What does it mean to "humbly accept the word God planted"? How do we know if we are doing this?
 - Is there a Scripture that you struggled to submit to? What has helped you yield to God's Word?
- Submitting to God's Will
 - Read Matthew 26:39—*"He went a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."*
 - What is Jesus praying about in this verse? What does it reveal about the nature of Jesus? What does it teach us about meekness?
 - How do we respond when we realize we don't want to do God's will? Why is meekness required in following God's will?

- Submitting to God's People
 - Read Ephesians 5:21—*"And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."*
 - What is our submission based on in this verse?
 - What does it mean to submit to God's people?
 - Does this kind of mutual submission have limits?

Examples of Meekness

- Moses—Numbers 12:1-16
 - What's happening in these verses?
 - Moses is described as "more humble than anyone else in Israel". Why? How does this passage show Moses meekness?
 - How can you show meekness when someone criticizes you?
- David—2 Samuel 5:5-14
 - What's happening in these verses?
 - How is David displaying meekness in this passage?
 - How can you show meekness when someone provokes you?
- Paul—2 Timothy 4:9-18
 - What's happening in these verses?
 - How does Paul demonstrate meekness here?
 - How can you show meekness when others let you down?

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

So how do we develop meekness in our lives? Remember the Beatitudes promise us that God blesses us when we are meek. There are several things we can do. Pick one of these to focus on this week:

- Take pleasure in the joys and successes of others. Romans 12:15 tells us to *"Rejoice with those who rejoice."* But too often we find it easier to be jealous or judgmental about what others are doing right. Meekness means you are glad for people who have more than you. When you see God blessing someone else, thank Him for it. Growing in meekness will help defeat envy and self-interest in your life.
- Take time before you form judgments. James 1:19 says *"Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to become angry."* When you hear something about someone else, do you rush to judgment? We all have had times where we heard only one side of a story and it seemed right until we heard the other side. Then we wish we hadn't been so quick to speak and judge.
- Moderate your expectations of others. Thinking about the burdens others carry will help you have patience and meekness in dealing with them. Whether it's your spouse, kids, or co-workers, you never fully know the strength of another person's temptations. Psalm 103:14 reminds us that *"God knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust."* If God treats us with this mercy, remembering our weakness, then we should do the same for each other.

PREPARING FOR NEXT WEEK

- Ask God to show you where you need more meekness—maybe it's in a particular relationship or area of your life. Begin to apply the ideas above to that situation.
- Memorize the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12). Add one verse each week to your memory.
- Next week we will talk about hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Read Psalm 63:1-11 this week and think about the desire the author expresses to be in God's presence.

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

23rd – 2 Kings 10; 2 Chronicles 22-23; 1 Timothy 5 | 24th – 2 Kings 11-12; 2 Chronicles 24; 1 Timothy 6 | 25th – Joel 1-3; 2 Timothy 1 | 26th – Jonah 1-4; 2 Timothy 2 | 27th – 2 Kings 13-14; 2 Chronicles 25; 2 Timothy 3 | 28th – Amos 1-3; Psalm 80; 2 Timothy 4 | 29th – Amos 4-6; Psalm 86; Titus 1