

Blessed Are The Meek

Matthew 5:5

INTRO – The third Beatitude, spiritual meekness, must flow from the first two; see the multiplicity of the graces of God. This is not a natural meekness, which can be evil, having a love of ease, slothfulness, and a self-serving shyness. Fleshly meekness can be easily deterred from good and persuaded towards evil because it has no backbone. Spiritual meekness is not wimpy. At the same time, consider some of Christ’s audience – Jewish zealots looking for a military and political overthrow of the Roman government through their new Messiah. You can hear them exclaim, “What do you mean, meek?”

The Beatitudes in the Old Testament – Jesus is again using the OT in His teaching (Psalm 37:11). We see in this psalm that those who wait on the Lord are the meek (vv. 9-11), and then we can see before that the picture of ‘waiting’.

- vv. 5-6. They commit (lit. ‘roll’) their way to the Lord. Meekness is rooted in a deep confidence that God is *for you* – not just that He is in control (Rom 8:32).
- v. 7. They rest in the Lord and wait patiently. They do not fret. They are quiet before Him.
- vv. 7-8. They cease from ungodly anger, not fretting over the wicked’s success. They are confident of their Lord’s vengeance (Rom 12:19).

A Portrait of Meekness –

Abraham – deferring to Lot (Gen 13:8-12).

David – sparing Saul (1 Sam 24, esp. v. 12).

Moses – rather than hearing a word of defense, a comment is made about meekness (Num 12:1-4).

Jesus – describes Himself as meek (Matt 11:27-30). He makes great claims, none of which negates His meekness. Meekness is not inconsistent with strength. We are to take on His yoke and learn from Him the grace of meekness. Meekness is a grace, a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:23).

Meekness Towards –

God - One who is meek is ready to submit to the providential, decreed will of God in events (Job 1:20-22), and to the revealed will of God as displayed in His Word (Matt 4:4).

Others – Meekness must characterize our relationships with one another.

- We must refuse to be provoked by others (Ps 38:12-13, Prov 19:11).
- We must extend forgiveness (Matt 6:12). We must forgive really (all the way down), fully (across the board), and often (as often as you are wronged), because this is the way that God forgives us (Col 3:12-13).
- We must love others (Phil 2:1-8).
- Meek wisdom points away from self to an objective standard (James 3:13-17). How backwards we have become. Man is supposed to doubt himself, and not doubt the truth. But we teach “Believe in yourself and question all authority”. Relativism is not meek; it is arrogant.
- Meekness in correction (Gal 6:1-2) is required. That is, there are times we must correct, but we must do so with a particular spirit.
- Meekness is not a “super-grace” for “super-Christians”. We are all to put it on (Col 3:12), seek after it (Zeph 2:3), and walk in it (Eph 4:1-2). This cannot be attempted in the flesh, but only in the Spirit.

But What About the Promise?

We must be faithful with the text. We cannot say “Blessed are the proud...”. Neither can we say “...for they shall inherit heaven when they die”. Jesus says that the meek will inherit the earth. The majority view of the evangelical church (and most Christian fiction writers today) is that 1) God is sovereign in some sense, but Satan is very much in control. 2) The world is going to get progressively wicked; righteousness will not prevail. 3) The church will grow increasingly wicked, and eventually apostasy, not revival, will characterize her. This is not a picture of the meek inheriting the earth. Nor is it what scripture teaches.

- 1) Satan is bound (Matt 12:28-29, Col 2:15).
- 2) Christ promised to build His church, a building Hades could not withstand (Matt 16:18-19). We are commanded to participate in that victorious work (Matt 28:18-20).
- 3) The Old Testament prophecies are full of predictions of the glorious Christian era (Ps 22:7-28, Ps 110:1-2, Is 11:9, Zech 9:9-10).

Promises to Believe

We do not inherit the earth through political or military processes, but the fullness of all things is promised (Eph 1:10). It will come in meekness, the preaching of the gospel, a righteousness and power outside ourselves. We will inherit like leaven takes a lump, like a tiny mustard seed takes a garden. But we are going to take it. The meek shall inherit the earth.