

Refine Women's Ministry
The Beatitudes: Matthew 5:1-12
Beatitude #3: Happy are the Humble before God
September 27, 2017 by Kim Peelen

What is the secret of freedom? It is in the conscious co-operation with the living God in the fulfillment of the pure design for which He made us. . . Then, however restricted and however straitened, we can glory in the end He is working to achieve.
Our emancipation is in our choosing to obey. Geoffrey Bull
Meekness is not impotence but power under control. John MacArthur

When Jesus begins His public preaching ministry, He opens with nine brief statements, declaring true happiness to true believers. His primary audience is His disciples who through their repentance and faith know The King and can obey the King's standards and therefore enjoy this blessedness. His secondary audience includes those who not know the King - to these Jesus tells them His Kingdom is available and invites them to know Him. But both groups are shocked by Jesus's new expectations. Assuming He would praise the spiritually proud Jewish audience for their adherence to religious rituals, instead, Jesus emphasizes that true blessedness is not based on circumstances or external forms of religion, but on the indwelling character of God in His redeemed follower.

The Beatitudes in Matthew 5:1-12 [NASB]

- 1 When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him.
- 2 He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying,
- 3 "Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 "Blessed are those who **mourn**, for they shall be comforted.
- 5 "Blessed are the **gentle [meek]**, for they shall inherit the earth.
- 6 "Blessed are those who **hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they shall be satisfied.
- 7 "Blessed are the **merciful**, for they shall receive mercy.
- 8 "Blessed are the **pure in heart**, for they shall see God.
- 9 "Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they shall be called sons of God.
- 10 "Blessed are those who have been **persecuted for the sake of righteousness**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.
- 12 "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Jesus calls for a new standard of living beginning with a destitute spirit of a beggar with no resources that pleads for God's rescue and ending with God's welcome into His heavenly Kingdom. This right attitude towards sin leads to mourning - intense internal agony over how my sin separates me from God - and true mourning leads to confession and repentance. God graciously responds with His forgiveness of sins that comforts my soul. In the third Beatitude, Jesus says people who are repentant, realistic about their sin, and are responsive to God and will inherit the earth.

It is not the absence of sin but the grieving over it which distinguishes the child of God from empty professors. A.W. Pink

Blessed Are the Gentle/Meek

- **Gentle (Meek** used in King James, NKJ, NIV) – from Greek root *praos*- means mild, gentle and soft. A meek person is tender-hearted, patient, submissive. Greeks used it to describe a domesticated colt, soothing medicine, a gentle breeze. It has the same root as *broken in spirit*, and can be interchanged, but *gentle* focuses on God’s holiness, while *poor in spirit* on my sinfulness. Translated: humble, afflicted, meek
- Does Not mean cowardly or deficient in spirit as in our modern definition
- “It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting.” *Vine’s Expository Dictionary*
- Jesus is gentle/meek. 1 Corinthians 10:1: “the meekness and gentleness of Christ”
- Power under control: meekness is by-product of humbling oneself before God. “*He that has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls*” Proverbs 25:28. A city with crumbling, untended walls is a ruin, just like an unbroken colt is worthless, even dangerous, but a trained horse is useful. Medicine in proper dosage is healing, but an overdose is deadly. Gentle breeze cools and refreshes; a hurricane destroys. A proud spirit leads to destruction, but a meek individual dies to self and trusts God to lead and direct him.

In your groups discuss:

Old Testament Use of Meek/Gentle

Psalm 37:7-11

Rest in the LORD and **wait** patiently for Him; do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who carried out wicked schemes. **Cease** from anger, and **forsake** wrath; do not fret, it leads only to evil-doing. For evil-doers will be cut off, but those who **wait for the LORD**, they will inherit the land. Yet a little while and the wicked man will be no more; and you will look carefully for his place, and he will not be there. But the **humble** [meek/gentle] will inherit the land, and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

1. What is the humble man commanded to do? What is the reward for doing this?
2. What is the humble man NOT to do (listed twice)? What results if I do this forbidden thing (what does it lead to)?
3. How do these verses illustrate being meek/gentle (rely on God, not self)?

Psalm 25:8-13

*Good and upright is the LORD; therefore He instructs sinners in the way. He leads the **humble** [meek/gentle] in justice, and He teaches the **humble** His way. All the paths of the LORD are lovingkindness and truth to those who keep His covenant and His testimonies. For Thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon my iniquity, for it is great. Who is the man who fears the LORD? He will instruct him in the way he should choose. His soul will abide in prosperity, and his descendants will inherit the land.*

4. Relate these verses to *Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth*. What qualities do the humble person possess and what does the LORD do for that person?

5. If you are **not** humble/gentle/meek, what might the LORD not be able to do for you according to these verses?

New Testament Use of Meek/Gentle

Matthew 11:20 -30

*Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Nevertheless I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven will you? You shall descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. . . At that time Jesus answered and said, I praise Thee, O Father, LORD of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and intelligent and didst reveal them to babes. Yes, Father, for thus it was well-pleasing in Thy sight. All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son, except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father, except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am **gentle** and humble in heart; and **you shall find rest for your souls**. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light.*

6. Why do you think the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum did not respond to Jesus's miracles with repentance (what attitude did they have)? Are these the 'wise/intelligent' or 'babes' that Jesus describes?

7. Those who do repent do certain things: what are they? What is their reward?

8. To whom does the Son choose to reveal God Himself: to the wise or babes?

Ephesians 4:1-3

*I, therefore, the prisoner of the LORD, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and **gentleness**, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

9. Discuss some areas you can walk even more worthy as a follower of Jesus Christ. How can developing a meek/gentle spirit (submissive to God and His Will) help?

Summary:

The standard for being gentle/meek is seen in both the Old and New Testament. The gentle person is not a wimp, but acknowledges his wretched sinfulness, mourns over it as God's holiness contrasts to his own fallen nature. He dies to self, allowing God to direct and control, not being concerned about defending himself (because he deserves nothing), but defends the honor and glory of God, because He is worthy. Even Jesus, the Son of God, had this submissive attitude towards the Father:

*For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, **WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH**; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but **kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously** 1 Peter 2:20 - 23.*

Now that attitude will reflect God's holiness, and not any of my silly human achievements. If I defend my own "holiness", exalt my self-sufficiency, or believe in my own strength, wisdom, and resources then I am not gentle, but arrogant, proud, stiff-necked. And I will not be wearing Jesus's yoke (I will be wearing my own yoke), so I will not learn the lessons He desires to teach me. It is in His Holy lessons that Jesus grants rest for my soul. There is no shortcut or other way. Jesus says, "want to join My Kingdom? I am looking for spiritually bankrupt, mournful, and meek followers who are responsive to God and His Ways."

. . . For They Shall Inherit the Earth

Jesus declares that the meek will be happy - possessing a true lasting joy as well as inheriting the earth.

Psalm 37: 22,27-29, 34

For those blessed by Him will inherit the land; but those cursed by Him will be cut off. Depart from evil, and do good, so you will abide forever. For the LORD loves justice, and does not forsake His godly ones; they are preserved forever; but the descendants of the wicked will be cut off. The righteous will inherit the land, and

dwell in it forever. Wait for the LORD, and keep His way, and He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you will see it.

Revelation 5:8-10

And when He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.”

1 Corinthians 6:8-10

*Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such **were** some of you; but you **were washed**, but you **were sanctified**, but you **were justified** in the name of the LORD Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.*

Summary: For they shall inherit the earth. Inherit means to ‘receive an allotted portion’ and the allotted portion to the meek is the earth. The Greek grammar renders this: Blessed are the meek, for ONLY they will inherit the earth. Proud people are excluded from inheriting the earth, “*unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven* (Matt. 18:3). God gave Adam and Eve the earth and commanded them to ‘*be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion*’ over all things (Gen 1:28). Jesus promises in Matthew 5:5 that when you become a believer, you enter the kingdom and share the original inheritance given to Adam and Eve. They will reign on the earth with Jesus Christ in His Coming Kingdom (Revelation 10:5). This is in the future when God will give Israel ALL the land He promised. Christians will share this inheritance with Israel when the LORD takes the earth away from the wicked and gives it to His redeemed children. However, even today I can rejoice in my inheritance promised when Christ returns as Conquering King of His Kingdom – there is meaning that the world does not see. George MacDonald states, “We cannot see the world as God means it, save in proportion as our souls are meek. In meekness only are we its inheritors. Meekness alone makes the spiritual retina pure to receive God’s things as they are, mingling with them neither imperfection nor impurity of its own.” (*Life Essential: The Hope of the Gospel*).

How important is gentleness? It is necessary for salvation (Ps 149:4), God commands it (Zeph. 2:3), is required to receive God’s Word (James 1:21), necessary for effective witnessing (1 Pet. 3:15), and most importantly, it gives glory to God. “but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God” 1 Pet.3:4.

How do I know if I am gentle? Do you respond humbly and obediently to God's Word? Do you get angry only when God is dishonored (not yourself)? Do you forgive, restore others, and make peace with others? Do you receive criticism well? Are you gentle when instructing others? Gentleness is power under control: God's power flowing through my submissive, humble heart that seeks to glorify God, not myself, and brings blessing and inheritance of the earth. Gentleness means to be finished with self for good.

Jesus, take the wheel. Take it from my hands, cause I can't do this on my own. I'm letting go, so give me one more chance, to save me from this road I'm on. Jesus, take the wheel. By Carrie Underwood

RESOURCES:

Precept Upon Precept: Sermon On The Mount, How Can I Be Blessed?, 2014

The Beatitudes: The Only Way to Happiness, by John MacArthur, 1998.

The Beatitudes: John MacArthur's Bible Studies by John F. MacArthur, Jr. 1990

Vines Expository Dictionary

Homework

1. Read 2 Timothy 3:16 - 17. As you meditate on being Gentle/Meek, how does God's Word encourage, convict or rebuke you? How is gentleness manifested in your life? How should it look?

2. Read Galatians 5 :16 -26. What is the source of gentleness? How can you walk in gentleness according to this passage?

3. What specific things are you going to do to develop gentleness in your life? What do you need to stop doing?

4. Numbers 12:1-9 - read this and record what you learn about meekness or humbleness of Moses. Contrast with Miriam and Aaron's character.

5. Write out Matthew 5:1-12 and work on memorizing the passage.