

Simply Unexpected – Week 2 – “What is Your Greatest Power?”

Introduction to the Beatitudes

Begin your study time together by reading Matthew 5:1-12. Our study this week is the third Beatitude, which pronounces blessedness on the who are meek. We do not generally consider meekness an effective strategy for success in the world. The Greek word translated “meek” is also translated “gentle” and “humble” in other places in the New Testament. This gives us a clue about how to understand the word as it is applied both to Jesus and to his followers. Jesus was gentle and humble in his treatment of sinners but his confrontations with those who actively opposed his ministry can hardly be described as meek.

This week: The blessing of meekness.

³*“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” (Matt. 5:5 NIV)*

Opening Discussion:

1. Share one thing that you found helpful from Sunday’s message.
2. In what ways, culturally speaking, do we equate meekness with weakness?
3. What are some ways, situations, and circumstances in which meekness might be a good thing from a cultural perspective?

Study Time:

The third Beatitude calls us to cultivate an attitude of meekness that impacts how we relate to and with one another.

1. The Greek word translated “meek” can also mean “considerate” and includes the sense of self-control. The New English Bible translates this Beatitude “How blest are those of a gentle spirit; they shall have the earth for their possession.”

- a. What are some ways that we can be considerate of others, especially those with whom we disagree strongly about something?
 - b. Read **Phil. 2:1-4** and reflect on how the characteristics that Paul lists relate to Jesus' call to meekness.
 - c. Given your discussion, what are some ways that we can view meekness as strength, especially in our interactions with others?
2. Jesus' interactions with most of the people he encountered were characterized by gentleness but not weakness. Jesus clearly exercised divine power when he healed the sick, raised the dead, and calmed storms. He was meek not because he was powerless, but because he chose to restrain his power while in human form unless it was necessary to the fulfillment of his mission.
 - a. Read **Matt. 26:47-54** and reflect how Jesus' response to Peter's attack on the servant of the high priest reveals his humility and meekness.
 - b. Jesus knew that he would be tortured and crucified following his arrest but chose to let it happen. He knew that he could call on "twelve legions of angels" to rescue him. In what way was Jesus' meekness in this instance an act of power, not weakness?
 - c. Read **Phil. 2:5-11**. How do vs. 6-8 apply to our understanding of what it means to call Jesus meek?
 - d. Spend the rest of your time discussing how we can demonstrate this kind of meekness in our relationships with others both inside and outside of the faith community.