

“Kingdom Come”

Sermon on the Mount Series: Third Lesson

“BLESSED ARE THE MEEK, FOR THEY WILL INHERIT THE EARTH.” (MATTHEW 5:5)

Introduction

- **QUESTION:** What impact is the series having on your faith so far?
- **Psalm 37:11** – Jesus seems to be quoting this passage, or at least have it in the back of his mind. The Psalm was recognised as messianic in Jesus’ day.
- “[The meek] are...“those who wait for the Lord” instead of fretting and scheming to right their own wrongs.” France, R. T. Gospel of Matthew. NICNT. In the context of **Ps 37.11** they have been oppressed, but wait on the LORD for vindication - patient trust.
- The position of this beatitude between those who mourn and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness is significant. Meekness is required if, having acknowledged my sinfulness, I am going to be humble enough to really hunger after righteousness.
- The challenge with righteousness is that it means coming into the light. If I am fearful of what others will think of me or defensive towards truth that people tell me, it is because I am struggling with a lack of humility and gentleness.
- It’s one thing to admit one’s own need, but meekness develops this to the position that I am happy to admit my need to others which is far more challenging.
- The blessing is paradoxical. The proud, boastful and pushy seem to inherit the earth.

Part 1 - Meek

- What is the Biblical definition of meek?
 - Greek: ‘praus’ means, ‘gentle, humble, considerate, courteous’. **Isaiah 61.1:** the Hebrew word translated in LXX as ‘poor’ is the same as that underlying the word ‘meek’ here.
 - “The meek are...deeply happy in a way to which the big-headed can never aspire.”
 - “Meekness is the opposite of self-will toward God, and of ill-will toward men.”
 - “Meekness is a controlled desire to see the other’s interests advance ahead of one’s own.” See **Gal 6:1**. Meek people are great listeners and learners.
 - Meekness and strength go together. “The meek man is one who may so believe in standing for the truth that he will die for it if necessary.”
 - Meekness is a lack of self-assertiveness or demanding things for self. It is a lack of sensitivity about self. No self-pity, self-defence, no feeling sorry for self, no retaliation (**1 Peter 2.21-25, Rom 12:19**).
 - The meek are “those who do not throw their weight about.” France, R. T. Matthew. NICNT. Meekness before God is an essential attribute if we are to be truly happy.
 - Being Meek means being strong but not feeling the need to display that strength.
 - The meek see themselves as unimportant, even if they are important (like Moses).
 - The meek relate well to people - they see themselves under God along with all others.
 - Christians realises they have all things in Christ anyway (**2 Cor 6:10, 1 Cor 3:21-23**) and so have no need to fight for things.
 - Many positive scriptures about meekness: **2 Cor 10:1, Gal 5:22, Col 3:12, 1 Peter 3:15f, James 1:19-21**.

- Bible examples of meekness
 - Abraham giving in to Lot.
 - **Numbers 12** – Moses the meekest man – seen in refusal to defend himself and in choosing to reject the comforts of Egypt. A humble self-emptying made at his own choice, like Jesus (**Heb 11:24f, Phil 2**).
 - David's dealings with Saul show the same meek attitude.
 - Jeremiah would not give up speaking the message God had given him despite what people were saying about him.
 - Stephen at his martyrdom is meekness incarnate.
 - Paul is gracious to people and churches who have hurt him.
 - Jesus is the ultimate example (same Greek word) – **Matt 11:28f.** (translated 'gentle') & **2 Cor 10:1**; See also **Jn 18:11**.
 - Jesus was led as a lamb to the slaughter – not dragged.
 - "He (Jesus) is an enigma to the world. And if you and I are not ... problems and enigmas to the non-Christians around us, then this tells us a great deal about our profession of the Christian faith."
- **QUESTION:** How does Jesus display meekness? What examples can you think of?
- What meekness is not
 - The meek are meek in dealing with God and men (mourners dealing with their state before God and state of the world). Not weak or easy-going. Meekness is not: niceness, laziness, complacency, compromise, tolerance. "Meekness restrains from private revenge, but it in no wise conflicts with the requirements of fidelity to God, His cause, and His people."
 - This beatitude deals a body-blow to the Jews who were hoping Jesus would be the warrior-Messiah to drive the Romans out of their land.
 - God's way has consistently been that of demonstrating his power through reducing our power – see Gideon in **Judges 7**.
- **QUESTIONS:** What does meekness look like in life? How can we develop meekness?

Part 2 - Inherit the Earth

- What does it mean to 'inherit the earth'?
 - Theologically
 - Is the 'earth' here a reference to the new heaven and new earth in the age to come, rather than this one? **Matt 19:28, 2 Pet 3:13, Rev 21:1.** "in the context of messianic fulfilment it connotes the regenerated earth...promised by the eschatological passages in the prophets (eg, **Isa 65-66**)." Hagner, Donald A. Matthew 1-13. WBC
 - The phrase is taken from **Psalms 37:11**. "The focus is on the principle of reversal of fortunes rather than on a specific "inheritance." France, R. T.. Matthew. NICNT.
 - Practically
 - We inherit this earth also in this way: "A man who is truly meek is a man who is always satisfied, he is a man who is already content." (**2 Cor 6:10, Phil 4:11, 1 Cor 3:21**) "Contentment of mind is one of the fruits of meekness."
 - The meek man will inherit the earth because of his humility – **Luke 14:11**.
 - "The man who is truly meek is the one who is truly amazed that God and man can think of him as well as they do and treat him as well as they do." This leads to the meek person treating others with great gentleness.
 - "...God can afford to exalt them without the danger of their getting proud."

- **QUESTION:** How will this promise affect the way you live this week?

Meekness And Majesty

1. Meekness and majesty
Manhood and deity
In perfect harmony
The Man who is God
Lord of eternity
Dwells in humanity
Kneels in humility
And washes our feet

Chorus
O what a mystery
Meekness and majesty
Bow down and worship
For this is your God
This is your God

2. Father's pure radiance
Perfect in innocence
Yet learns obedience
To death on a cross
Suffering to give us life
Conquering through sacrifice
And as they crucify
Prays 'Father forgive'

3. Wisdom unsearchable
God the invisible
Love indestructible
In frailty appears
Lord of infinity
Stooping so tenderly
Lifts our humanity
To the heights of His throne

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Resources and Suggestions

- Douglas Jacoby's podcast series on the Sermon on the Mount: <https://www.douglasjacoby.com/the-sermon-on-the-mountain-00-introduction/>
- Meekness and Majesty: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDGF3c8tsko>
- My podcast: "Beatitudes series: Blessed are the meek" - Quiet Time Coaching: Episode 111 - <https://www.malcolmcox.org/beatitudes-series-blessed-are-the-meek/>
- Study the life of Moses looking for examples of meekness and what resulted from his meekness.