

# **Teachings of Jesus**

## **Blessed Are The Meek**

### **Matthew 5:4**

#### **Introduction**

Today we're going to study the third beatitude, 'Blessed are the meek. The teachings of Jesus are a real paradox compared to our own human wisdom and thought patterns. Jesus seems to turn everything upside down. He says:

- The last shall be first.
- It's better to give than to receive.
- To die is to live.
- To lose is to find.
- To be rich you must be poor.
- To be strong you must be weak.
- To rule you must serve.

It seems that life in the Kingdom of Heaven is the exact opposite of what our world teaches and believes. The people wanted a Messiah, who would supernaturally bring upon the earth the kingdom of God. They believed that God would raise up His Messiah and by miraculous means this Messiah would wipe out the Roman rule from Israel. Even the disciples believed this. In Acts chapter 1 and verse 6, they asked the Lord: 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? "Are You going to work a supernatural miracle that will bring Your kingdom upon the earth here and now?" Their mental and physical connection to this world blinded them spiritually. Jesus response in John 18:36: 'My kingdom is not of this world, but My kingdom is in the hearts of men'.

What kind of deliverer is this? Who's going to follow Him but a bunch of sissies and weaklings! He's speaking to a group of people that felt the kingdom should be taken by force! (Read Matthew 5:1-12) What kind of meek and mild followers are going to make a difference in a culture that promotes power and might as the key to true success. Who are the meek and how can they possible inherit the earth!

#### **I. The Meek**

In 1 Corinthians chapter 1, Paul put it like this in verses 26 and 27, 'For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish

things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty'.

Meekness is not weakness. It is not indecisiveness. It is not timidity or being unsure of yourself. It is not being mild-mannered or hesitant to act or speak. It is not cowardice, or spinelessness. It is not peace at any price and cost. It's not lacking in confidence, or being shy. It is not being introverted or simply well-mannered. It not being politically correct socially inept. Well then what does it mean? Well, I'm glad you asked that question! When you examine the scriptures you'll find that the Greek word for meekness simply means 'to be gentle, to be humble, to be considerate, and to be courteous'.

In the Greek language, it was used in three different ways. It was used by doctors to describe a soothing medicine that would take away pain. It was used by sailors to describe a cool fresh breeze that refreshes. And it was used by farmers to describe a horse that had been broken so it would be useful for riding or ploughing. Meekness is power under control. Thank God for modern medicine! A couple of Tylenol can cure a headache fast. But how many of you know if you abuse drugs – you can easily end up like Michael Jackson! Who doesn't enjoy a cool breeze especially on a hot day! But we all know from Storm Stories on the Weather Channel that hurricanes and tsunamis can destroy whole towns and villages and devastate a whole region. And the only place for a bucking bronco is the Rodeo! They're pretty useless anywhere else.

So the meaning of meekness is power under control. Paul describes it in Philippians Chapter 2 in the life of Christ as self-emptying, humility and brokenness before God. For us, as followers of Christ, it is a willingness to be seen as sinful, a willingness to be seen the way God sees you and a willingness to see the way other people see you. John Bunyan put it like this, 'He who is already down cannot fall'. It is the abdication of self off the throne of our life. In a spiritual sense it is having everything even though you possess nothing. In a literal sense it is having nothing even though you possess everything.

Psalm 37 and verse 1 says this: 'Fret not because of evildoers'. Meekness influences our attitude to life. When we esteem others better than ourselves it dramatically affects our attitudes and behaviours. Meekness influences your attitude towards the word of God. James 1:19 exhorts us to receive the engrafted word with meekness. When God the Holy Spirit convicts and challenges us, we accept it and do something about it. It doesn't mean applying the word of God to the person beside you, or behind you, or someone you know in your family. It's applying it to yourself, to your own soul and to your own life. Meekness influences your attitude towards your

brothers and sisters, preferring one another in honour. It even affects your attitude towards those you disagree with! - 2 Timothy 2:24-25, 'The Lord's servant must not quarrel but be gentle to all, good, do not take offence, or show offence, one who can reduce his opponents by the mildness of his manner'.

Is that what you're like? Are you even tempered and full of self-control? Or do you fly off the handle if something doesn't go the way you think it should? Do you create tension and strife or diffuse it? Do you react with hostility and anger or with assurance and poise? I have a plaque in my office that quoting Isa. 30:15, "...in quietness and confidence shall be your strength..." Blessed are the meek.

## **II. The Inheritance**

The US Postal Service posted on its Web site this warning: IF YOU receive a notification in the mail from an 'estate locator' saying that there is an unclaimed inheritance waiting for you, beware. You could be the target of a slick con artist." Why? Because thousands of people received a notice in the mail saying, 'A relative of yours has died and left you an inheritance.' As a result, many mailed in a fee of \$30 or more for an 'estate report' that supposedly would explain where the inheritance was located and how it could be claimed. They were sadly disappointed. All respondents received the same report—and the chance of anyone inheriting anything was practically nil. Schemes like this prey on people's natural desire to receive an inheritance. Maybe that long lost rich uncle you never knew you had died and left you a fortune! They say if it sounds too good to be true, it usually is! And yet, the Bible speaks approvingly of those who provide an inheritance. Proverbs 13:22 says, "One who is good will leave an inheritance to sons of sons."

Jesus' words in this beatitude echo those of King David in Psalm 37:11 "The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." What kind of inheritance are you going to receive? Do you think you'll "Inherit the earth"? What an interesting prospect!

But how can we be sure that this is not just another crafty scheme designed to deprive us of something we already have? The earth is God's wonderful creation. He made it. He owns it. And he can give it to whoever he chooses. He writes in Psalm 2:8, "Ask of me, that I may give nations as your inheritance and the ends of the earth as your own possession." The apostle Paul described Jesus as the one "whom [God] appointed heir of all things." (Hebrews 1:2) We can have full confidence that when Jesus said

that the meek "shall inherit the earth," he did so in good faith, and he has the proper authority to fulfill his promise.—Matthew 28:18.  
The crucial question is, How will this promise come true?

Everywhere you look today, it seems that the aggressive and the high-minded are gaining the upper hand and are taking what they want. Where do the meek come into the picture? The earth is plagued by serious problems with pollution, and its resources are being exploited by the greedy and the shortsighted. Will there even be an earth worth inheriting?

Well if Jesus made this promise, there must be something worth inheriting! God created the earth for a specific purpose. In Isaiah 45 it says, "For this is what the LORD says—

he who created the heavens,  
he is God;  
he who fashioned and made the earth,  
he founded it;  
he did not create it to be empty,  
but formed it to be inhabited—  
he says:  
"I am the LORD, and there is no other.

God's purpose for the earth is to be an our eternal home and His headquarters. When Adam and Eve willfully disobeyed God by breaking the command that had given to them, they in reality turned their back on the one who provided them with everything that they had. (Genesis 3:6) In so doing, they lost their beautiful Paradise home not only for themselves but for the rest of us as well. (Romans 5:12) Did the first couple's disobedience thwart God's purpose in creating the earth? God could have annihilated them. But Psalm 105:8 says, "He remembers his covenant forever, the word he commanded, for a thousand generations. God is faithful to his word. He will make sure that the promise of inheritance is not only available but also restored in all of its splendor.

In Revelation 21:4, John tells us that in the promised new world, God "will wipe out every tear from our eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore." What Jesus promises is an earth that is truly a Paradise. The transformation of the earth into a paradise will take place under a government that exercises its dominion from heaven. In the kingdom of Heaven, Jesus is the King! First, that Kingdom will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth." Then, as the "Prince of Peace," Jesus Christ will fulfill these prophetic words spoken by Isaiah, Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with

justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. In that Kingdom those who have chosen citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven will inherit the New Heavens and the New Earth.

“Happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth.” William Barclay’s New Testament Wordbook states, “There is gentleness in the work meek, but behind the gentleness there is the strength of steel.” It denotes a mental disposition that enables a person to endure injury without resentment or thought of retaliation, all as a result of having a good relationship with God, and that relationship becomes a source of strength for him.—Isaiah 12:2; Philippians 4:13. God has a special blessing of inheritance for those who act in faith instead of react to their circumstances. And the benefits are huge! Jeremiah writes in Chapter 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

### **III. The Blessing of the Meek**

The blessing begins with yielding your will to the will of the Spirit. It’s allowing the Holy Spirit to direct and control your life. He helps us to learn how to rule our emotions instead of letting our emotions rule us. The Holy Spirit teaches us how to direct our energies in a disciplined and productive manner. How many of you know it’s a blessing not to overreact to things!

The blessing of meekness keeps us from moving to extremes in our attitudes and behaviours. We learn to lay aside harsh attitudes and judgments towards others. When we become even-tempered we begin to find that faith flourishes before us. The self-made, self-sufficient see no need to trust anyone else. But the meek are quick to acknowledge and accept God’s guidance and supervision. The meek have a unique ability to see life from a broader perspective and find it easier to trust God’s timing in things. It is the meek person who discovers that God is near to those of a contrite heart and a humble spirit. It is the even-tempered person and humble in will that realizes the abiding presence of Christ in the most chaotic of times.

A person can even be poor in material possession and yet gain a greater eternal inheritance because of their Christ likeness. But even in this life the meek enjoy the blessing of God. Who do you go to when you need advice? People don’t go to the conceited or arrogant. They don’t confide in the self-important or self-promoting. The blessing of the meek is that they are approachable, self-giving, and self-sacrificing. Their warmth and genuine compassion cause others to seek them out. They know the voice of God. They exercise the fruit of the Spirit. They enjoy the blessing and peace that goes beyond knowledge. It is the meek who really have learned to enjoy

God and His Creation. So many are just too busy to inherit the blessings that God causes to shine upon the earth each day. A sunrise, a beautiful sunset, fragrant flowers, the beauty of the earth. The meek pause for a moment here and there to be enriched by the beauty and blessing of God's handiwork.

Too often we put so much emphasis on attaining goals and achieving success and pursuing a course of action that we have little or no time to enjoy the journey. The blessing of life is not be preoccupied with motivation or making your mark – it is enjoying the inner assurance of God's abiding presence that makes you aware of his hand of blessing all around you. For the meek the burden of work is transformed into a labour of love. Their service is given in joy for the Master – not as a job for the boss. The meek do not strive. They are obsessed with reaching the top because they know they're already there! They are not threatened that someone will take their place because they are secure in their relationship with God. Their gifts always make room for them. They do not engage in pettiness or subscribe to the "pecking order". They are content to follow the Holy Spirit's leading in their life. The meek enjoy the blessing of not needing to try to impress others. They do what they do to the best of their ability and give God the glory for whatever they do accomplish. The purpose of the meek is to fulfil the purpose of God. As a true citizen of heaven they bring a little bit of heaven into every encounter and situation of life. What you have is God's gift to you – what you make of it is your gift to God.

The meek live under the control of the Holy Spirit. It is reflected in their discipline, in their gentleness, and in their obedient submission to God's will.

## **Conclusion**

Jesus' teaching on being meek is not just good moral advice. It is a quality of character present only among those who recognize their complete lack of resource apart from the divine presence of God. There are a lot of good people in the world who are even-tempered, who live good lives, who share with the poor and work to relieve the oppressed. But that does not make them meek! The kind of meekness Christ teaches about is the kind that acknowledges God as the source of every blessing and the supplier of every need. The meek Jesus is talking about are faithful stewards. They know nothing in this life belongs to them. They see themselves as the stewards of what God owns. And they feel blessed to serve Him!

According to the world, nice people finish last! According to Jesus, the meek inherit the earth. The world says push hard and try to the best of the best. Jesus says, "Do your best and enter into my rest!"

If you can hear him calling today, you will hear him saying:

“Come unto me, all of you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your soul!” (Matthew 11:28-29)