

**5:1 And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. <sup>2</sup> Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:**

**<sup>3</sup> “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,  
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**<sup>4</sup> Blessed *are* those who mourn,  
For they shall be comforted.**

**<sup>5</sup> Blessed *are* the meek,  
For they shall inherit the earth.**

**<sup>6</sup> Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
For they shall be filled.**

**<sup>7</sup> Blessed *are* the merciful,  
For they shall obtain mercy.**

**<sup>8</sup> Blessed *are* the pure in heart,  
For they shall see God.**

**<sup>9</sup> Blessed *are* the peacemakers,  
For they shall be called sons of God.**

**<sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,  
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**<sup>11</sup> “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**

This morning we come back to our happiness guide. We see those who **should be congratulated** because they have God's approval. We see what happens to a person when they are really a Christian.

We, like the Ephesian church in Revelation, know a lot of doctrine. And they were told to **return to their first love**. I think the beatitudes show us what they were **to return to**. It was not the period in their lives when they were **most excited** about the idea of God. It was the period when the **beatitudes were most true of them**. When was that for us? Or is it right now. Do we see our natural poorness of spiritual resources **more now** than ever? Do we have more **true remorse** over our sin **now** than we ever did. Are we more **surrendered to God's will** than we have ever been? These are the qualities that God wants in us. They are the qualities that make us truly useful in His hands. Our initial excitement is not what needs to be return. What needs to return is our deep down, truth born, desire to **be God's person**.

**<sup>5</sup> Blessed *are* the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.**

The million dollar question in this text is what does it mean to be Meek?

What comes to mind if someone were to tell you that a certain person was **meek**? What would we understand that to mean?

One dictionary said this:

Showing patience and humility; gentle.

Easily imposed on; submissive.

I think we have a tendency to think of a meek person as a person who maybe is **shy**, certainly not one to **draw attention** to him or her self. Someone who will face unfavorable circumstances and **not try to get them changed** because that would be too uncomfortable. They will put up with discomfort because it would require **self assertion** to make it better. We might see a meek person as accepting a wrong because the **confrontation** to right the wrong would be too **distasteful**.

We have a tendency to see **meek** as implying week, unmotivated, docile.

Like all Bible study, we must first start by defining what the Bible means **at one point** by what it says at **other points**. We have to always carry the assumption that our first impression of a passage, our first understanding of what it means, may be very far off base. And I think the way we commonly use the word **meek** does not capture the **Biblical** meaning.

It would be easy to think that Christians are supposed to be people who don't care enough about anything to get too worked up over it. They are never going to **welcome conflict** for a **higher good**. They will never be in the middle of controversies or do anything that might inadvertently bring attention to what they are doing. They would never offer any kind of harsh rebuke.

So how is this word Meek used in the Bible?

Well, one help we get right off the bat is we know that Jesus was meek.

**Matthew 11:28-30**

**28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**

**29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.**

**30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."**

The word for gentle is substantially the same word as is used for Meek. So when we think of the concept of the word Meek, we must think of it in such a way that it **would apply to Christ**. This helps us immensely.

Our docile, unmotivated, shy, non confrontive idea of meekness has to be immediately put aside. Christ was none of those things. Think about Christ's life. Think of all the times He told the truth boldly to those who hated Him. He

did not mince words. In fact, at times He used **intentionally** offensive concepts to drive home His point. Think of the woes, the curses he issued to the Jewish leadership. We need to understand that a person who fits the correct definition of **MEEK** was doing those things. A person who fits the Biblical definition of **GENTLE** was doing those things.

We must understand here, like in all the beatitudes, that these qualities are not natural personality types. This is not referring to the person that is generally unnoticed and would never think to start a conflict of any kind. No. No human being is born meek.

But meekness **IS** a fruit of the spirit.

**Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV)**

<sup>22</sup> **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**

<sup>23</sup> **gentleness** (the same Greek word for Meekness), **self-control. Against such there is no law.**

So this meekness is a supernatural result of the Holy Spirit residing in a person's life. It is not a trait that can be reached merely by human effort. It is an "**other world**" characteristic.

So what is it?

What does it look like?

How do we know when we are seeing it?

I remember Mike explaining meekness and how he expanded on the word's use in horse training. The Greeks often used this word in talking about horse training. Anyone who trains horses knows what **meekness** is. It is what the horse trainer is **shooting for**. It is when the horse keeps its eyes on you for its every direction. It is when it stops being **self led** and submits itself to the **masters rule**. This is meekness.

I was reading in the Old Testament while also studying the sermon on the mount. And I was surprised by how much of what Jesus said in His sermon was taken from old testament books. Especially proverbs.

John Piper made an observation that I am sure I would not have spotted. He said that **Psalm 37** is probably the passage Christ was referring to when He said blessed are the meek.

It contains much the same meaning.

Look at this:

**Psalm 37:11 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> **But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.**

This gives us a wonderful reference to begin to more fully understand meekness.

OK now in the Psalms we know there is a lot of **parallelism**. This is when something is said slightly differently twice, but means the same thing. Understanding this use of language helps us understand a lot of things that would be hard to understand otherwise.

In this instance we have a parallelism in verse 11 and verse 9.

**Psalm 37:9 (NKJV)**

**<sup>9</sup> For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth.**

**Psalm 37:11 (NKJV)**

**<sup>11</sup> But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.**

So who inherits the earth? In verse 9 are those who wait on the Lord. In verse 11 are the Meek. Since these two passages are meant to tell us the same thing, we can assume that those who **wait on the Lord** and those who **are meek** are very similar.

Now what does it look like when someone waits on the Lord? What does it look like if they are meek?

This is so very helpful for us.

**Psalm 37:5-8 (NKJV)**

**<sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring *it* to pass.**

**<sup>6</sup> He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.**

**<sup>7</sup> 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 brings wicked schemes to pass.**

**<sup>8</sup> Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret--*it* only *causes* harm.**

OK now we are getting a very good **word picture** of the meek.

We are going to walk through this passage in Psalm 37 and when we are done we will have a very good picture of these meek people who are the **happy ones**.

**<sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD,**

So this is where the meek person starts. It is natural for human beings to think that **our** lives are **ours**. I can live where I want, eat what I want, spend what I want, say what I want, go where I want, do what I want. That is not how the meek person sees his life. The meek person comes before God and

says, I have no rights. I no longer **have** a way. It is no longer mine. Now it is **your** way. And that is the **only** way I **want** now. I am not keeping my options open. I am no longer seriously considering paths that are not yours. They are simply not an option I will consider.

What you see here is **absolute surrender** to the will of God. This is the ultimate of the prayer **Thy Will be Done** on earth as it is in Heaven. When **God's way** is **my** way, we are fully committed to doing the will of God. Remember that this is not the **exceptional** Christian. This is the normal Christian. Have you ever surrendered your way to God? Have you ever prayed to God and said **here I am. Take me and use me however you want.** I will do your will if you will just show me what it is. I commit to saying yes to your will. I commit to **saying no** to anything **contrary** to your will. I want what you have for me. I know that **your way** will be better than **my way**. Lord, I give you myself.

The meek person starts by giving the control of his life to His God.

Next the meek person trusts in this God.

**Trust also in Him, And He shall bring *it* to pass.**

**<sup>6</sup> He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.**

We often sing the song

**Trust and obey, for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus than to trust and obey.**

There is so much truth in that song.

If you try to obey Jesus without trusting Him, all of your work will be a chore that has **no pleasure** in it. If you try to **trust Jesus** it is impossible **not** to obey Him. You will be miserable if you are pretending to trust Jesus but you don't **really trust Him** to the point that you believe he will make your obedience **pay off**. Happiness comes from the combination of trusting and obeying.

Misery comes when we only pick half of the equation.

So the meek person looks at Christ and says, He is the source of my ultimate happiness. I am choosing the **best life possible** by **laying my life** in His charge. I **know** what kind of God He is. I **know** His attributes. I know that He **only desires my good**. He is working all the time to work out everything for My good. The meek person rationally calculates that I **should** trust Christ. I **must** trust Christ. My **best alternative** is to trust Christ. I would be a fool to **distrust** Christ. I **will** trust Christ.

Where is the point in your life where you know Christ is calling you to do something but you absolutely refuse to do it? Or you habitually do not do it?

Let me ask you, what is there about **Christ** that you **do not trust**? Do you honestly believe that He will not **give you something better** than the thing you will not give up for Him? That is an issue of trust. Why not commit, right now, to trusting Christ in that area of your life? Why not say- **Have thine own way Lord. Have thine own way. Hold over my being absolute sway.** Do it today and test and see just how good the Lord really is.

The meek person commits his way to the Lord, keeping no alternatives open for self. And he lives in the trust that it is the smartest thing he can possibly do.

What does the meek person believe it will **accomplish**? What does He trust Christ for?

**And He shall bring *it* to pass.**

**<sup>6</sup> He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.**

The meek man trusts that God will make everything right. We do not have to carry that burden. It is released from our shoulders. God will make us righteous. First it happens in **Justification** where we are set free from the **guilt and penalty of sin**. Then it happens in our **sanctification** as our actions become more righteous, more conformed to God's will. And God will make sure that the truth is known. It may not be known in this life, but our righteousness, **the good that God has worked out in us**, will be displayed for all to see.

OK, then what does the meek man do?

**<sup>7</sup> Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him**

Note that there is a distinct difference. It is a mutually exclusive difference. Both cannot be done at the same time. There is **rest**. And there is **fret**. There is no **restful fret** or **fretful rest**. We get to pick one.

While I was preparing this sermon something happened to me where I instantly wanted to set the record straight. I wanted to right a wrong done to me. I wanted to let the world know how right my cause was. I wanted to take action to clear the injustice. And I just kept studying. And I saw that the Lord allowed that circumstance to happen so I would see with great clarity the difference between **me** and **meekness**.

One of the most interesting definitions of biblical meekness I read about was this:

**Meekness is humility toward God and toward others. It is having the *right* or the *power* to do something but refraining for the benefit of someone else.**

I am not trying to say that **action** is **never called for** or that **rebuke** is **never called for**. But we must be very careful.

We need to ask, what is our indignation about? Is the button that was pressed one where I felt unappreciated, unnoticed, misunderstood, slammed, shirked, accused falsely, taken for granted, slighted.... we could go on and on. We all know those feelings. We all know what sends us to pout, or pity ourselves, or fits of rage, or periods of resentment or anger. We all know those things. Meekness takes another path.

Meekness responds like David did in this story:

**2 Samuel 16:5-14 (NKJV)**

**5 Now when King David came to Bahurim, there was a man from the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei the son of Gera, coming from there. He came out, cursing continuously as he came.**

**6 And he threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David. And all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left.**

**7 Also Shimei said thus when he cursed: "Come out! Come out! You bloodthirsty man, you rogue!"**

**8 The LORD has brought upon you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. So now you are caught in your own evil, because you are a bloodthirsty man!"**

**9 Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Please, let me go over and take off his head!"**

**10 But the king said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David.' Who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?' "**

**11 And David said to Abishai and all his servants, "See how my son who came from my own body seeks my life. How much more now may this Benjamite? Let him alone, and let him curse; for so the LORD has ordered him.**

**12 It may be that the LORD will look on my affliction, and that the LORD will repay me with good for his cursing this day."**

**13 And as David and his men went along the road, Shimei went along the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, threw stones at him and kicked up dust.**

This is a perfect example of meekness. David is not going to right this wrong. David is not about to say I am so great that I should never have stones thrown at me. Instead he says

**let him curse; for so the LORD has ordered him.**

**12 It may be that the LORD will look on my affliction, and that the LORD will repay me with good for his cursing this day."**

Is someone treating you unfairly? Is someone accusing you of things that are not true? Is it doing any harm to you other than demeaning how others might think of you, how they might regard you? Is the damage primarily to your pride? To what you think you deserve?

Guess what? This is meekness practice.

But you say, "it is not right. Look at my case. Do I not deserve better treatment? Is it not right to get on my soapbox and voice my complaint?"

Look at Jesus. He is the perfectly meek example. This is what scripture says:

**1 Peter 2:21-23 (NKJV)**

**21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:**

**22 "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth";**

**23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;**

Do you see the exact meekness we are talking about. Remember our definition?

**Meekness is humility toward God and toward others. It is having the right or the power to do something but refraining for the benefit of someone else**

Sometimes we have to get off our high horses and simply admit that from God **we deserve far worse than we are getting**. Maybe a person **should** treat us better. But this meekness, this gentleness is a virtue. It is always considering first, not so much what I deserve, but **what course of action is best for all those around me**.

Now what else do we see about Meekness in Psalm 37?

**Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.**

**8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret--it only causes harm.**

Do you become absolutely absorbed at times by the injustice done by people? Is it all you can think about? Does it determine your whole demeanor? Does it determine the tone of your day?

That is fretting. And Jesus says STOP. Do not fret. Do not fret when **wickedness** wins. Do not fret when **wicked men** win.



But we want to think, I should be mad. This anger is fitting. It is righteous indignation. I am moral to feel this way. Let me ask you, how can it be morally superior when the God of heaven tells you to stop it?

This refusal to be meek, do you know what it causes? Do you think some good will come of it. Do you think being absorbed with wishing it would leave is going to lead to a positive result?

The God of heaven says this.

**DO NOT FRET IT ONLY CAUSES HARM.**

Is that what we want? Do we want harm? Do we want harm to our relationship with God? Do we want harm to our relationship with our church families or our storge families? Do we want harm to our friends or neighbors? If we do want harm, we know exactly what to do. **Keep fretting about wickedness. Keep getting yourself worked up.**

Do we want good to happen? Follow meekness. Be like Christ.

Cease from that specific kind of anger. Cease from the kind of anger that focusses on what we have no power over. **Cease from anger for wicked men doing wicked things and prospering.**

And what is in it for us? Some small reward? A hundred dollar gift card?

**For they shall inherit the earth.**

Isn't there a sort of irony here? Those who will **not allow the wicked to jerk their chains**, those who will **trust God** for all outcomes, those who chose to have **no agenda** other than **God's agenda**, no **way** other than **God's way**, those who will **not lift a finger to be great**, to be **treated in any kind of special way** that they would really like to be treated, those who will not allow themselves to **give any power** to the wicked by **envying** them, those who **refuse to fret** about the injustices that God allows temporarily, those are the **very people** who get **control of the planet** at some point in the future.

I think that it is very rare that a congressman or a senator or a president gets his or her position due to **meekness**. Maybe it has **never** happened. Many of these people, certainly not all, but many, have a deep desire for power. They **want control** of their part of the earth. That is driving them. But whatever they get, it will **always be fleeting**. It will be short term. It will only be partial. They hold that **world dominion** as being the most important thing to achieve. They will not submit their will to God's will. They will chase after this goal and spend lots of other things to achieve it. And what do they get? Wind. Sand. They do not get the satisfaction of **real ultimate control**.

And the people who **surrender to God**. The people who **trust Him** for every **outcome** in every **circumstance**. The people who are **content** to allow things to remain in God's hands. The people who refuse to fret. What do they get?

They get the **control of the earth**.

What a tragedy it is that the devil has so fooled the people of this world to believe that they will achieve, **apart from God**, the rewards that **only God can provide**. How ripped off they are in their blindness. We do well to share this gospel whenever and wherever we can.

True believers get the best stuff and they get it forever. The meek, those who **trust God in their soul of souls**, they get the rich reward. Those who share the same attitude as Christ, the gentleness of not responding based on how we **could** respond but responding based on **how God wants us to respond**, those people get what our world will sacrifice their souls for day after day. The question comes down to, **are we meek?**

Do we have no way but God's way?

Do we trust Christ that He is making everything we face worthwhile?

Do we rest in **every circumstance**, trusting that He is **working it all out** for our good and His glory?

And do we **refuse to fret** when the wicked get the best stuff temporarily?

If so, we are exhibiting the **same meekness** of the people who inherit the earth.

We would do well to look at our **actions** and **reactions** this week and examine our lives. Is my life **really submitted** to God in every area? Do I **really** trust Christ? Our lives show what is true. We do well to ask, why did I **say** that? Why did I **do** that? Why do I **feel** this thing? What **thoughts** are leading me to it? Are they **Christ** controlled or **flesh** controlled. Are they coming from a position of **meekness**, or a position of **pride**. May God help us in this quest to experience true meekness.