

"Blessed Are The Meek"

Matthew 5: 5

Elijah and the still small voice (1 Kings 19:11,12). (3) Lightening--thunder. (4) In Aesop's fable, the soft sunshine did what the blustering wind could not accomplish; and that lesson still applies truly.

- b. Noise is not necessarily strong: Many a coward hides behind a smoke screen of loud talk, verbal abuse, reviling and profanity.
- c. The money changers in the temple ran readily and did not resist Jesus because they knew "the wrath of the Lamb" (Revelation 6:16) was not mere bluster (Matthew 7:28,29).

III. THE PROMISE, "*THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH,*" IS CONDITIONED UPON THE QUALITY OF MEEKNESS, THAT FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WHICH GROWS IN THE SOIL OF HEAVENLY LOVE AND WISDOM (James 3:13-18; Psalm 37:11).

- A. The meek are already entering upon/receiving their inheritance.
 - 1. Here and now, they enjoy **life abundant**: "All things are yours" (1 Corinthians 3:21-23).
 - 2. The meek enjoy the fullest, richest, freest life on earth, because they have the greatest capacity for true joy.
- B. The meek inherit the earth in the finest and truest sense.
 - 1. They enjoy it more fully while in it: They are best prepared to receive/enjoy its greatest benefits because they have developed and possess the greatest capacity for blessedness.
 - 2. Joy in life does not depend as much on what one has as what he is and does: The selfish greedy man cannot inherit the earth -- he may own it briefly, but it possesses him and he is its slave. **The Summum Bonum (supreme good) is not to own the most land or most money** (Luke 12:15; Matthew 6:19-21).
- C. But the supreme inheritance of the earth bestowed upon man is eternal.
 - 1. The best treasure and hope of the earth is eternal life with all the rich heavenly benefits God gives his faithful children (Ephesians 1:3; 1 John 5:10-12; Revelation 2:10).
 - 2. This heavenly crown awaits every gentle/submissive, obedient soul that looks for and earnestly desires the coming of the day of God (2 Timothy 4:8; Hebrews 5:9; 1 Samuel 15:22).
 - 3. Are you meek/teachable? Will you hear, obey, follow and defend Christ and His truth today? (Hebrews 11:6; Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32; Mark 8:38; Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Jude 3).
 - 4. Meekness is a vital key to the kingdom of heaven; It is one of the building blocks of spiritual maturity/security (James 1:21; Matthew 18:3). But let not that person who stands in silence while sin and error run rampant flatter himself by thinking his silence is meekness! Faithless or weakness are better words for describing him!

--Charles E. Crouch

INTRODUCTION —

- I. MEEKNESS IS THE CHILD OF HUMILITY: IT DESCRIBES A LIFE YIELDED TO GODS WILL, THE OPPOSITE OF SELF-WILL.
 - A. It is gentle forbearance in dealing with others: In teaching, saving, correcting and restoring them.
 - B. But this element of the fruit of God's Spirit goes much deeper than any attitude toward men: It accepts the will of God for perfect wisdom and absolute goodness (Luke 22:42).
 - C. The Greek word for meek was used to describe tamed animals.
- II. THE THIRD BEATITUDE IS ASTONISHING BUT BY NO MEANS POPULAR.
 - A. Most men do not admire this virtue or consider it very great.
 - B. It makes no appeal to the man of this world for two reasons:
 - 1. Meekness is not looked upon by him as an asset but a liability: It sounds more like surrender than success to him.
 - 2. He does not believe it is true that the meek shall inherit the earth: He believes in the prosperity/survival of the most aggressive, self-assertive and pushy.
 - 3. His beatitude says, "Blessed are the strong, heavy-handed and outspoken, who can hold their own and have their way, for they have the advantage on earth."
 - 4. He is like the child who said to its mother, "I don't want to be your little lamb. I want to be your little tiger."
- III. AND THERE IS NO CLOSING OUR EYES TO THE FACT THAT THIS POSITION **SEEMS** QUITE SANE: THAT IT IS THE HARD-FISTED, HEAVY-HANDED, AND OUT-SPOKEN WHO INHERIT THE EARTH.
 - A. How out of place or ridiculous this beatitude would look, if hung in many business offices in this competitive world!
 - B. Yet it sounds no more like madness now than it did originally: It seemed contrary to Israel's national goals/history then.
 - C. But God truly desires the happiness and success of everyone; and happiness and success are by-products of **RIGHTEOUSNESS**: Right thinking, speaking and doing (Psalm 1; Romans 14:17).

DISCUSSION —

- I. **BUT IF MEEKNESS SEEMS PUNY, SMALL, WEAK AND WORTHLESS TO MANY OF US, LET US NOT FORGET THAT IT WAS NOT THE CASE WITH THE WISEST AND BEST OF THE BIBLE SAINTS.**

- A. For example, consider Paul, the Lord's fearless apostle to the Gentiles.
1. He appealed to the Corinthians "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ..." (2 Corinthians 10:1).
 2. To the Galatians he commended "the fruit of the Spirit," which includes "meekness" (Galatians 5:22-23).
 3. He instructed Titus to teach the people of Crete "to be gentle, showing all meekness toward all men" (Tit. 3:2).
 4. He counseled the Colossians to "Put on...a heart of... meekness..." which precedes longsuffering (Col. 3:12).
 5. He advised Timothy to "Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith...meekness..." (1 Timothy 6:11).
- B. Peter, after learning its true value, is of the same judgment.
1. 1 Peter 3:4, 15: "...In the sight of God **of great price.**"
 2. He is quite aware that meekness often fails to look well **in the eyes of men, as formerly in his own case.**
- C. Clovis Chappell tells the story of a French peddler on the back streets of Paris selling cheap jewelry, on whose cart was a bit of stone tagged with a card with the inscription, "Rock crystal, price twenty-four francs"--*The Sermon On The Mount*, p.39. But it was a pure diamond, today among the royal jewels of a great nation. In the same way many pass by the rare gem of meekness: Only a few realize its enormous and precious value and seek to possess it.
- D. There are two outstanding examples of meekness in the Bible.
1. In the Old Testament, Moses is the great example (Numbers 12:3). He was not a weakling or coward, but a monumental superb man: A mighty deliverer, law-giver and builder of a great nation.
 2. In the New Testament, Jesus is the most perfect example: "Come unto me....and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:28-30; 1 Peter 2:21-25).
 - a. Though he perfectly embodied every virtue, meekness is one of the two virtues in himself to which he calls our attention and invites us to learn.
 - b. The two sides of the nature of Jesus may well be learned and remembered here: (1) Before God, he was God's Lamb and the world's Redeemer. (2) Before Satan/the forces of evil, he was God's lion and his **stormy North side** was visible: He opposed the wrong, defended the true, and never compromised God's truth.
1. It is rarely used/exalted; no exact English equivalent.
2. Many think it means a spineless creature with a jellyfish constitution; but nothing is further from the truth.
3. The example of Moses proves this: **Strength grown tender and non-violent** (Exodus 11:8; 32:19-29).
- B. Its **synonyms** are: Gentleness, humility, mild-tempered, not easily provoked, non-violent, patient.
1. **It describes a life yielded to God's will and purpose: The opposite of being self-willed.**
 2. The Hebrew word means to be **molded**, as putty in God's hands.
 3. The word meekness describes real strength: A "lamb" refusing to fight back.
 4. "It is might with a caress in its brawny hands" --Chappell.
- C. The word **gentle** is used in connection with it more than once.
1. Gentleness is its best synonym: It is forbearance toward others, "enduring injury with patience and without resentment" or revenge (1 Peter 2:18-25; 3:13-22; Romans 12:18-21).
 2. The meek folks are the gentle folks and the meek man is God's gentleman in responding to and in dealing with others. Meekness is gentle forbearance in correcting, restoring, teaching and helping sinners overcome Satan's devices and recover themselves from his captivity (2 Timothy 2:24-26).
- D. What are some characteristics of this Christian gentleman?
1. **Considerate:** He is genuinely courteous and truly considerate of others, as well as himself (Galatians 6:1,2).
 2. **Self-disciplined:** He has temper and tongue under control (Mark 3:3-5).
 3. This child of humility is **submissive, humble-minded and strong, but not high-minded or high-handed.**
 - a. He is teachable (Matthew 18:3,4; James 1:21).
 - b. He does not boast or swagger: He is too strong to feel the need to do this (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).
 4. He is **courageous:** No shrinking violet, coward, inferiority complex or Mr. Milktoast.
 - a. But a true gentleman is sometimes stern and "not very gentle" (Romans 11:22; John 2:14-17).
 - b. He has the highest type of courage. --Nichols, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 203.
 - c. Jesus, when reviled, "reviled not again; ...but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:23).
 5. Christ's **gentleman is strong in meekness, one of the dynamics absolutely essential to keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace** (Ephesians 4:1-3).
 - a. The gentle things are the strong things: (1) Gravitation. (2)

II. WHAT THEN IS THE MEANING OF MEEKNESS?

- A. It is a word a bit difficult to define, but not impossible to learn, for more than one reason.