

The Gospel of Matthew

Title: Blessed Are The Meek

Text: Matthew 5:5

INTRODUCTION: Like the first two beatitudes, this one was just as shocking and perplexing too. He taught principals that were totally foreign to their thinking. Scripture does this in our lives as well, even as believers.

Jesus' audience knew how to act spiritually proud and spiritually self sufficient. They did believe a Messiah would come soon and would commend them for their goodness. He would, at last, give the Jewish people their rightful place in the world.

They eagerly anticipated the Messiah would deal harshly with their enemies and gently with them. The Jews despised Roman oppression and often denied its existence. Cf. John 8:31-33 where the Jews' pride kept them from seeing the true slavery they were in, which was bound to sin. You cannot find an external righteous freedom.

1. ALL JEWS HOPE FOR DELIVERY OF SOME SORT BY SOME MEANS

- 1.1. There were some Jews who were looking for the true Messiah. This was revealed to Simeon in Luke 2:26 "**And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.**" He saw Jesus as an infant.
- 1.2. Others, such as the Pharisees, expected the Messiah to come with great fanfare and supernatural powers. He was to overthrow the Romans and establish a theocracy to rule the world.
- 1.3. The Essenes who lived in obscurity, and the Zealots, who desired a conquering political Messiah.
- 1.4. In whatever way certain groups thought the Messiah would come, they by no means, expected Him to be gentle and meek. The idea of a meek Messiah leading them was not possible.

2. THE PEOPLE REJECTED JESUS BECAUSE HE DID NOT FULFILL THEIR EXPECTATIONS

- 2.1. We are not to think of God to be like us, what we want or how we want Him to act
- 2.2. Jesus preached against any means where they put their hope in something else. John MacArthur notes "*They first rejected, then hated and finally killed Him because, instead of approving their religion, He condemned it. Instead of leading them to independence of Rome, He disdained revolutionary acts and offered a way of even greater subservience.*"

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- 2.3. In the early days of apostolic preaching, the death and resurrection of Jesus were the greatest hinderances to belief in the gospel. The idea was foolishness to the Gentiles and a stumbling block to the Jews. 1 Corinthians 1:23 *“but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness.”*
- 2.4. The rejection of Jesus started long before His crucifixion. It started here, when He began to teach on humility, mourning and meekness. This odd preacher can't deliver what they are looking for with messages like this. Yet in Isaiah 40-60 much is spoken of concerning the Messiah as a suffering servant as well as a conquering Lord.
- 2.5. Why did Jesus' teaching seem new and unacceptable? The OT was neglected and ignored and this was not the Messiah they wanted. **NOTE:** Today in much of the evangelical church, people want a Jesus that fits their lifestyle.

3. THE MEANING OF MEEKNESS

- 3.1. It is also translated *“gentleness”* and has a basic meaning of soft or mild. The term was used to describe a medicine or the breaking of a colt. The wild animal nature was to be broken to be made for useful work.
- 3.2. Poor in spirit focuses on our sinfulness and meekness focuses on God's holiness. When we look at ourselves honestly, we are made humble by how sinful we are, and when we look at God, we are made humble by seeing how righteous and holy He is. Being poor in Spirit causes us to turn away in mourning and meekness turns to God in seeking righteousness.
- 3.3. For most of Jesus' followers, justifying their own ways, defending their own rights, and serving their own ends was their goal. Meekness didn't fit that agenda. Ephesians 4:1-2 *“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love.”*
- 3.4. Meekness does not connote weakness. It means power under control. Proverbs 25:28 *“Like a city that is broken into and without walls Is a man who has no control over his spirit.”* Proverbs 16:32 *“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who captures a city.”*
- 3.5. Medicine abused is useless, an untamed colt is useless, emotion out of control also destroyed and has no place in the kingdom of God. Meekness uses resources appropriately.
- 3.6. Meekness is the opposite of violence and vengeance. Hebrews 10:34 puts some real thought into this, *“For you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.”*

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4. THE MANIFESTATION OF MEEKNESS

- 4.1. Abraham and Lot
- 4.2. Joseph and his brothers
- 4.3. David and Saul (1 Samuel 24:5-6)
- 4.4. By contrast to David, King Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:4-5) He performed a rite only for the priests, he was arrogant, he was made a leper until he died.
- 4.5. Jesus in turning over the tables, but His wasn't protecting His will.

5. THE RESULTS OF MEEKNESS

- 5.1. Paradise, lost after the fall, will be reinstated
- 5.2. God will someday completely reclaim His domain and His children will be part of that.
- 5.3. The word inherit means one receiving his allotted portion. We live by faith and hope in a certain promise that we will inherit the earth.
- 5.4. On the other hand "the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9).

Application: Meekness is necessary because only meekness gives glory to God. Meekness is reflected in our attitude towards other children of God.