

05-18-14

Scripture:

Title: Redefining Meekness

### **Matthew 5:3-5**

*3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

*5 "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.*

Things we've been looking at so far quite different

Different from what we think...

Different from what the world says...

Not what we usually hear at all...

## **Different from the world**

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Poor in spirit – shouldn't we be spiritually proud

I know many people that are...

We must see our hopelessness apart from God

Last week – we're supposed to mourn

On Mother's day of all things...

Aren't we supposed to be happy?

Aren't these verses talking about being happy?

We need to mourn over sin

Sin in our lives, sin in the world

See sin for what it is – an insult to  
the One, True, Holy God

Then we will be comforted, God's comfort,  
God's forgiveness

Today's verse says we're supposed to be meek, gentle

Now, aren't we supposed to be proud?

Proud of what we've done  
All of our accomplishments

This would've come as a blow to the Jews

They thought they had it  
They were following the Law  
Doing what God said...  
They were descendants of Abraham  
The chosen race...

Shouldn't they be proud of that?

That's reason to be proud  
They had it made...

Jesus begins here with what He wants

A broken spirit, mourning and now humility  
This is what's necessary to enter the kingdom

No self-righteousness, no spiritual pride

And now gentleness/meekness...

Doesn't victory belong to the strong?

Don't we have to grab for the "gusto"

What's this meek business?

Sounds like we have to become a bunch  
of wimps...

The nation of Israel had been under Roman rule since  
63BC – they despised the Romans

Ruled by Herod and his family

Ruled by Roman governors (Pilate)

They despised the Romans

When will the Messiah come?

Remember Simeon and Anna

They had lived until they saw Jesus

Until they saw the Messiah

Hope was running high

The Messiah, could it be

He'll wipe out those awful Romans

He'll show them – we're God's people

These are not the words of a conqueror

Poor in spirit, mourning, gentleness/meekness??

Remember Jesus' answer when Pilate asked if He was  
the king of the Jews?

Most kings have kingdoms, thrones, countries

Pilate saw none of this w/ Jesus

Legitimate question

Jesus said – my kingdom is not of this world

They expected Jesus to come riding in on a white horse – wave His hand, wipe out the Romans, set up His kingdom

Jesus is setting up His kingdom

But His kingdom is not of this world...

He comes in not w/ a sword

He says they need to be poor in spirit,  
they need to mourn, they need to be  
meek/gentle

The meek/gentle shall inherit the earth

What is that? Doesn't make any sense...

What's He saying...

It isn't the self-sufficient

It isn't the self-righteous

It isn't the proud and the strong and the arrogant and the confident and the satisfied

It isn't the religious who enter my kingdom.

Instead, He said...

It is the broken and the mourning

It is the meek/gentle, the hungry and the thirsty

The merciful and the pure and the peacemakers

The persecuted and the reviled and the slandered who never retaliate

These are the citizens of Jesus' kingdom

Citizens of the kingdom of heaven

The real citizens...

Blessedness, happiness is for those who...

Are realistic about their sin and repent of it

This new kingdom is not for military conquest

This new kingdom is not to gain material possessions

This new kingdom is not for showy miracles

This new kingdom is for the gentle, the meek

What about standing up for yourself?

What about fighting for what's right?

**Ephesians 4:1-2**

**Titus 3:2**

*...to malign no one, to be peaceable, **gentle**, showing every consideration for all men.*

**Colossians 3:12**

*12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, **gentleness** and patience;*

## Blessed are the gentle?

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**Matthew 5:5**

Many of us know this verse as blessed are the meek

Blessed are the gentle

What's the difference?

What does it mean?

It often gives the idea of wimpiness, weakness,  
someone who doesn't stand up for themselves, or  
anything for that matter

Checked my thesaurus for meek  
Humble, timid, submissive  
Gentle, mild, lowly, weak  
Fearful, tame

Is this saying we have to be timid, weak, fearful??

Meek in Merriam-Webster –

1. enduring injury with patience and without  
resentment : [MILD](#)
2. deficient in spirit and courage : [SUBMISSIVE](#)
3. not violent or strong : [MODERATE](#)

OK, everybody, we have to be short on spirit and  
courage, can't be violent or strong, have to be weak,  
timid and fearful...

How many want this? No courage..., no spirit  
Raise your hands?

Let me think, Jesus was meek, right?

You know all those pictures, long curly hair  
Kinda thin, sickly – that's meek, right?

These pictures are not the biblical idea of Jesus, nor is  
this a biblical idea on this word

Need to throw out the old pictures

Throw out the old ideas of meakness...  
Start with a totally new one

What about...

Jesus clearing the temple?

Does that fit this definition of meek?

How about his dealings w/ the Pharisees

Woe to you...

Jesus was not a coward, Jesus was not weak

He was meek/gentle

*Many believe that "meek" isn't "manly."*

*They mistakenly assume meekness implies cowardliness and cowering.*

*It implies neither.*

*Meekness is a humility of spirit, "a quality of sincere and straightforward behavior, suggesting a lack of arrogance and pride."*

*Meek people have great strength. It is simply that their strength is subordinated — their power is under God's control.*

*Meek leadership is humble leadership.*

Jesus' power was under the control of the Father

The Greek word is *praus*...

It's basic meaning is mild, gentle, soft

Used to describe soothing medicine

A gentle breeze

Something soothing, something gentle, even comforting

It is gentleness, mildness – not weakness

It is power under control

It comes from self-emptying,

Brokenness before God

When we see our spiritual poverty and we mourn over it – we come to the place of submission to God's power – surrender to the Highest Power

## Power under control

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This is power under control...

### **Proverbs 25:28**

*28 Like a city that is broken into and without walls  
Is a man who has no control over his spirit.*

### **Proverbs 16:32**

*32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty,  
And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.*

The Greeks used this term for a broken colt

What good is an out-of-control horse?

How much use is there for one that is under control?

Power under control

Meekness/gentleness is a fruit of the spirit...

## The opposite of vengeance and violence

A meek person never defends himself because he knows he doesn't deserve anything. He doesn't get angry about what's done to him, because he doesn't deserve anything.

The same Jesus who drove out the thieves in the temple is the same Jesus who said nothing against the false accusations of the false witnesses at His phony trial...

Meekness/gentleness doesn't defend itself  
Meekness/gentleness will die defending God

Meekness/gentleness involves surrender of our purposes, our goals, our ambitions – to God

God alone can take these things  
Make these things into what they should be

We see this character in Abraham – when he gave Lot the choice where he wanted to go when they were separating...

We see this in Joseph who was 2<sup>nd</sup> in command in all of Egypt and yet, spared the lives of his brothers...

How many times did David have the opportunity to kill Saul, and waited for God to take care of his enemy

Think about Moses

Facing down Pharaoh...  
Striking the rock...

Leading the nation of Israel

### **Numbers 12:3**

*3 (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth.)*

Great power under control

This is the act of shifting our confidence in ourselves

Over to confidence in God...

Is it a weak person or a wise person who surrenders themselves to the strongest power there is???

## **Inherit the earth**

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### **Matthew 5:5**

*Inherit the earth...*

For the Jews, inheriting the land was a big deal

Promised to Abraham

Continued through Moses

Never really fully happened...

Jesus is saying here that it is not the proud, not the strong, not the defiant

It is those who are gentle

Who will inherit the earth...

Who will come into God's promises

Jesus said – except a man become as a little child...

### **Psalms 37:11**

Those who see their spiritual poverty

Who mourn over sin

Who surrender their will to God

These people are blessed

We are part of God's kingdom

We have comfort

And – we will inherit the earth

We have an inheritance – safe and sure

God's promises will be ours completely

***Conclusion:***

Again, we need to see ourselves as poor in spirit

There is no one righteous, not even one

We need to mourn over our sin

Seek God's forgiveness...

We need to be meek/gentle – biblical definition

Under God's control, surrendered to His will

How do you know if you're meek?

How are you doing in the self-control dept.?

Or... Do you just get angry?

Do you just react?

How do you respond in "tough" situations?

Obedient to God's Word or not...

How are you at making and seeking peace?

The gentle/meek forgive, restore...

Or do you stir things up...

How are you at receiving criticism?

At the start were you wondering – do I want to be meek/gentle?

Better questions perhaps...

Should we practice self-control?

Should our responses be based on God's Word?

Should we be seeking peace?

Should we receive criticism?

Should our lives be lived under our own control or under God's control?

Not our own control – not seeking our own for we are poor in spirit, mourning over the sin in our lives and that of the world, living a life under God's control not my own

This is true happiness

Sure does seem backwards

This is how we enter God's kingdom

This is where true comfort is found

This is really the way to gain...

Benediction:

**James 1:21**

*21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.*

Sermon outline

05-18-14

Matthew 3:5

D\_\_\_\_\_ from the world

Blessed are the g\_\_\_\_\_?

Power under c\_\_\_\_\_

Inherit the e\_\_\_\_\_