

May 31, 2015

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK

Matthew 5:1-12

The blessed mournful become the blessed meek. And if you think “meekness” evokes the image of a doormat, someone people can walk all over, then the blessing of God becomes an even more obvious response to a desperate need. But the meek should never be considered to be just spiritless weaklings unable to help themselves. The meek may include the infirm disabled, or, the physically handicapped. For such the blessing of God is the necessary response to a desperate need. God blesses them and cares for them and gives them the earth as an inheritance. Such people may have a meekness about them, and they are blessed in their spiritual and physical poverty. But meekness should not be seen as a watered-down spinelessness, but rather as a timid sort of neediness. Servanthood. They want, or, need to find spiritual work.

Psalm 37:10-11 says: Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look well at his place, he will not be there. But the meek shall possess the land, and delight themselves in abundant prosperity. Psalm 147:8 says, The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down...

The meek are not just submissive to some human will, but surrendered to God. The meek are lowly; not defiant, but obedient. They are humble but righteous. They may not be entirely bold, or, extroverted, or, outwardly ambitious, but mild mannered, easy-going, and conservative in their activities. Needing guidance, the meek are accepting of God’s guidance. The meek, in Christ’s mind, as He proclaims the promises of the Beatitudes, are the followers, those who identify with a crowd and have no need to stand out. Like a young bronc, the meek have been broken, and are able to receive training. The meek are the disciples learning to be faithful. The meek know their strengths, especially the strength of their master, but they also know their weaknesses ...without their master, they are lost.

Among the meek, there is a patience, a contentedness, a calm. There is a sense of faithful resignation; not a giving-up, but a calm acquiescence to the will of God concerning their lives. The meek reveal a divine sort of temperament in that their zeal is tempered by knowledge, their anger is tempered by understanding and compassion, and their fear is tempered by trust. The meek are not after power, but after peace. They do not claim their rights, but stick to their duty. They do not seek revenge, but let bygones be bygones. The meek are able to overcome evil with good. They don’t have to be the leader of the band, but they will play their instrument. They don’t have to be the director of the protest, but they will be involved in the cause. The meek accept the Passage of Scripture that tells us that all things

work together for good for those who love. (Romans 8:28) The meek are reassured by Paul's claim that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!" (Philippians 4:13) The meek are like "water, which while gentle and seemingly acquiescent to every circumstance is nevertheless indomitable, with patient power to flow around or wear down all true obstacles." (George LaMore) Meekness is not primarily a matter of reveling in "how small I am," but in "How Great Thou Art." (George LaMore)

Job was meek when he was able to say, "The Lord gives and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" Mary was meek when she was able to say, "Behold, I am the handmaiden of the Lord; let it be with me according to Your Word." (Luke 1:38) And Christ was meek when He said In the Garden of Gethsemane, "Not my will, but Thine be done!" Jesus, Himself, had said, "I am meek and lowly in heart..." But He also said, "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant." (Matthew 20:26)

The meek walk the middle ground between excess and poverty; they are simple. The meek walk the middle ground between recklessness and cowardice, they are loyal, theirs is a stability. The meek walk a middle ground between rage and angerlessness, they are kind, gentle, and hopeful, but also serious. The meek walk the middle ground between being hasty and being slow-tempered; they are tranquil and temperate. They walk the middle ground between bitterness and excessive light-heartedness. They know joy. The meek walk the middle ground between pride and self-abasement; they are modest. They walk the middle ground between doubt and over-confidence; they are secure and trusting. They don't often appear to show a lot of zeal, but they are not lazy; they are constant and steadfast. The meek are neither opinionated, nor are they undecided; they are open-minded. The meek are neither obnoxious nor timid, but moderate. And the meek are neither fearful, nor courageous; they are committed.

The meek are the opposite of the aggressive and ambitious. The will of the meek becomes the will of God, nothing more, nothing less. The meek are pleasing to God, because their greatest wish is to please Him. The meek live out the words of the Lord's Prayer: They will be done on earth as it is in heaven. That's why they have a special inheritance.

THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH

The meek are promised a wonderful inheritance. Jesus said that they will receive the earth, the land. But what is meant by the word is not a territory, but a place to belong. There is a legacy of the meek. Because they belong, the land usurped by aggressors is rightfully theirs. The aggressors will eventually disappear either through God's uncompromising judgment, or, through their own undoing. Because aggressors are divided against themselves, and at odds with each other, they will destroy themselves. The meek will always be there, the aggressors

will fade away. This is the will of God on earth as it is stated in the Magnificat, where Mary says, "He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts, He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree."

The meek find a special peace, a place of peace. Their legacy is not a position of power, not returning persecution for persecution, but returning peace in any circumstance. The meek have let the love of Christ control them. For they are convinced that Christ has died for all, and they know that He died that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for Him... (2 Corinthians 5:14-15) As we approach meekness, we are beginning to please God.

A final word about the poor in spirit, the mournful, and the meek. These are the three stages of turning toward God. At first, we are stopped in our tracks and find no good in ourselves. We are spiritually impoverished. Then when we are hurt enough, we mourn, we know that the only thing we can do is turn to God for help. And finally, we begin to set our minds on the will of God, not our own wills; we begin to be meek... You may say that you have turned toward God long ago. Now the Spirit has made you bold, not meek. Your faith has brought you joy, not mourning. And your heart is rich in Christ, not poor in spirit. Come let us test and examine our ways to see if there is any evil within us. Without God we are nothing. Remember, you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Repent, and believe the Gospel. Repent and hunger and thirst for righteousness, for then you will be blessed again; you will be satisfied, you will be faithful...full of faith!