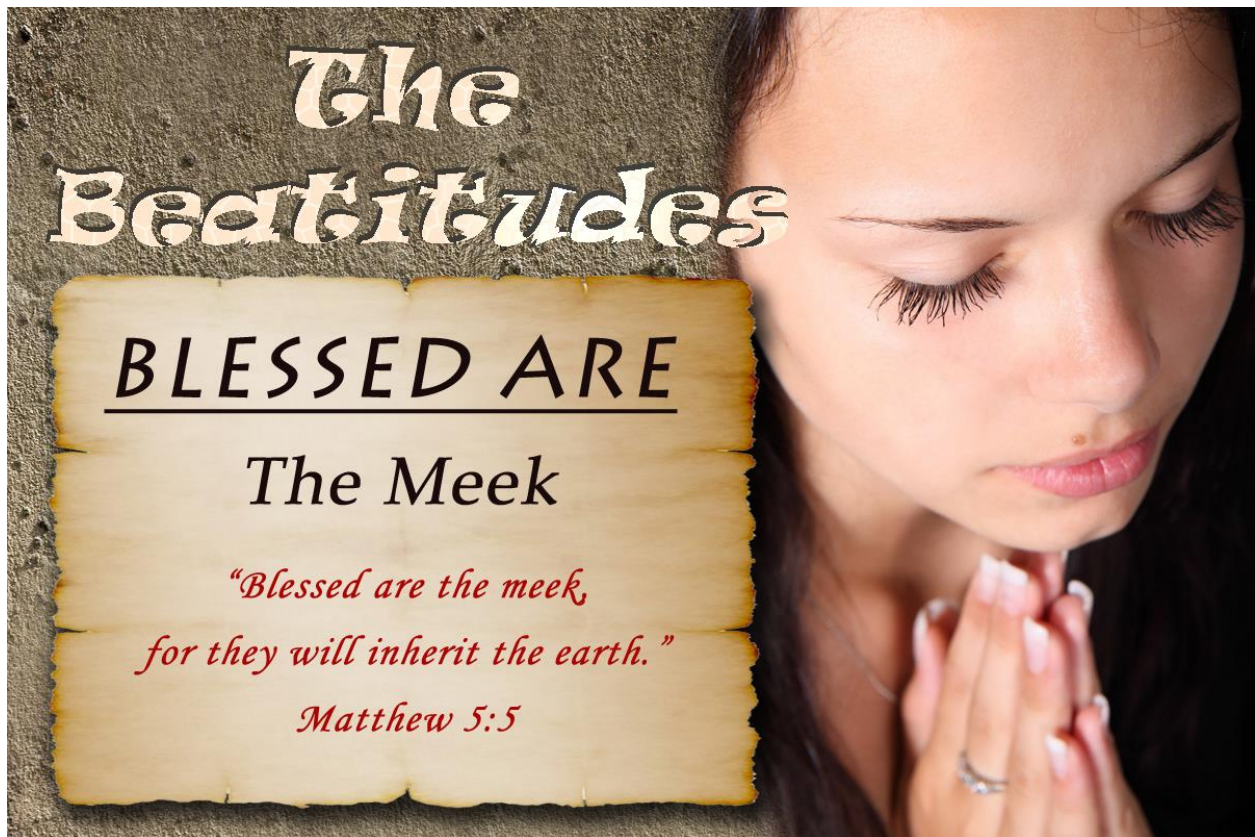


July 17 “Blessed are the Meek”

Matthew 5:5

**Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.**



Special Music: “Gentle Like Jesus”

Sovereign Grace Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IT7yylyRMe4>

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK

Do not mistake
My silence for weakness.
The humility I seek
Cannot be found
In the oblique
Nature of the spoken word.

Take my yoke and learn
The nature of meekness,
Gentleness speaks
Volumes in quiet places.
As love leaks
From my soul without a word.

Melt your sword
As an act of kindness
Fondness for the unique
Rhythms of grace
Forever replete
With whispered word

Whipped and beaten
The Son of Righteousness
Stood silent and meek
Humanity's soulful interface
Surrendered To God speak

And the Creator's word.

The slanders of humanity

Decry the voice of meekness

As pale and weak

Misunderstood and commonplace

An ugly, broken, thoughtlessly bleak

Misapplication of God's word

As I am called to mirror

My savior's call to meekness,

Attributes that some find weak

I see my place because of grace

Not timid, nor coward speak

But unseen strength and embodied word.

Blessed are the meek

Inheritors of the earth.

Humans neither appreciate nor understand the word meek. So many people define the word with adjectives like weak, cowardly, mousey, quiet, insignificant, defenseless. They see those who express meekness as doormats for the rest of humanity. We do not associate the meek person with a competitive, macho, braggadocios, athletic, or warrior mentality. No, we think of them as librarians, squints, scientists, artists, musicians, poets; weaklings that walk in shadows to avoid the barbs and ridicule from those around them.

Kin Hubbard says this: “It’s going to be fun to watch how long the meek can keep the earth once they inherit it” and Barbara Cocoran says: “In New York City, the meek don’t inherit the earth. The big mouth does.” That is the way society thinks of the word meek. They believe that meekness should be avoided at all costs, that meek people equivocate to failure as a human beings, that the meek are food to be eaten by the rest of the world. And I will admit, in a world that sees power and strength as the models for success, the meek often suffer.

The meek are never chosen first for playground teams. The meek are often relegated to menial jobs. The meek are only sought out if one is looking for an employee that will obey without question. Meekness is seldom tolerated, especially when conditions call for strength, action, or leadership. In the aftermath of a disaster, people seldom seek out someone meek to lead them. This, again, points to a complete misunderstanding of the nature of meekness.

I love this quote from Daniel Jacobs: “When I was reading the Bible, I came across the word ‘meek.’ It means to be humble. I asked God, I want to become meek, allow me to become meek. About two months later I was struck with

cancer. I realized this was God testing me. If you want to become appreciative, and humble, and meek, I'll strip you of everything."

Jacobs is asking an important question. "Can we stay meek and humble before God when we have lost everything? Can we embrace the Job persona even when our world comes crashing down around us?" The moment when we realize that we have lost everything and are completely and totally dependent on God's provisions is the best time to let God teach us about meekness.

But let's be honest with each other. There are very few among us that are willing to go through a Job moment in order to find humility. It seems like too high of a price to pay. Why won't God just snap his fingers and suddenly we all have the character of Jesus? Why do we have to go through all the pain and trouble to learn to be humble and meek? Why do we have to learn the lesson the hard way? The reason is pretty simple. We are a stiff-necked people given to stubbornness and tradition. We are used to driving the wagon and are just not interested in giving up the reins.

Humans have created their own dilemma when it comes to this. We tend to measure the character of a man or woman by what they can accomplish on their own. We have come to a point in civilization where we intentionally leave God out of the conversation. "Look what I did. Look what I have accomplished. Look how I managed to get this far on my own. God loves me and I appreciate that, but I don't really need his help. Isn't that obvious?" In our private prayers we may thank God for all that he has done for us and for all the help he has given us, but

when it comes to thanking God in public, it is almost like we are afraid people will think less of us if we give God the credit.

We revere those athletes, actors, and business tycoons who stand up and proclaim Jesus as Lord and are thankful for his presence in their success, but so many of us are just won't do the same because we feel that people may see us as weak. As humble. As meek. But Jesus calls us to meekness:

Matthew 11:29 reads:

“28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Jesus goes on to tell us that we need to humble ourselves as servants to the people around us. He tells us to turn the other cheek, to love our enemies, to bless those who persecute us. He tells us that we need to yoke ourselves to him, for his yoke is far better than going it alone. When he says that his yoke is easy, it does not mean that we no longer need to plow, but with Jesus' help, that plowing is going to be much easier. That is the essence of a heart of meekness and it is not a spirit of weakness. It takes far more courage and fortitude to love those people who say hateful things about us. To not strike back when we are struck. To pray with kindness in our hearts for those who seek to do us harm.

And to admit to others that we can't do it by ourselves and are grateful for the yoke of Jesus that makes all things possible.

Jesus allowed the Sanhedrin to beat him, put a crown of thorns on his head, strip him naked, whip him, spit on him, and finally nail him to a cross until he was dead. But he never turned his back to his Father, nor did he cease to acknowledge God as his Father before those so adamant on destroying him.

**Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.**

This is not a teaching only found in the New Testament. Jesus doesn't pull this concept of earthly inheritance for the meek out of thin air. In Psalm 37:11, David says,

**11 But the meek shall inherit the earth;
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.**

If people really want to live in peaceful times, we need to develop meekness in our hearts and stop rushing to judgement. We need to love our neighbors no matter the circumstances.

But David goes on to explain that meekness has another purpose.

Psalms 25:9 - The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

I can remember my teenage years. That time, I was trying to prove to my parents that I could make my own decisions. After all, my parents were not trained up on

the new ways of thinking and I really couldn't help being smarter than they were. I had an appreciation for Rock and Roll, mini-skirts, and church in a way that they just didn't. They couldn't even do new math, and algebra seemed to be way over their heads. Of course, I just assumed that because they didn't grow up with such things. So, when it came to the way the world was running, I had a leg up on them. I had the best of everything. I could play baseball AND watch TV. My mother had always made me use Brylcreem and comb my hair back. They didn't believe me when I told them that the other kids in high school laughed at me. So, I started wetting my hair real good and pulling it back before school. By the time I got to school it was dry and I could let it down. Because I was smarter than my parents. And for years they pretended like they didn't know.

Don't chastise me. Everyone goes through it. It seems like a necessary part of growing up, that time of beginning to separate from our parents, where our confidence is definitely bigger than our experience or our britches. And if tolerance and compromise are not present on the part of both the teenager and the parents, an otherwise loving home can turn into war zone.

However, it is in that period of transition that we often learn the most important lessons in our lives. How our parents react to our audacious natures becomes an example for how we will treat the people around us, including our spouse own children. As parents, we want to be that example that our children need, hoping that they will have some takeaway of mercy, grace, and meekness. Because, just like David is telling us, **“The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.”** Without a humble spirit, without the presence of

meekness, we simply can't be taught. What could we possibly learn if believe we already know everything there is to know? Until we admit that we have something to learn, we have no need of a teacher. Just like David says, God wants us to bow to meekness so that he can teach us.

This shouldn't be a difficult thing as we ponder the vastness of Creation. Recently, the James Webb Telescope found its way into our cosmic toolbox, allowing us to see farther into the universe than we ever have. The telescope gives us clear images up to almost 300 million light years away. 300 million light years. That is beyond mind boggling. And I was worried about my parents finding out I was letting my hair down at school.

In parts of Africa, warlords are regularly kidnapping young girls for the sex trade, only to have the girls bought back by various organizations, only to be kidnapped again, and bought back again, child commodities caught in a hopeless loop of gruesome commercialism. But me, I was worried about my acme.

In Pakistan, Muslim groups drag Christians into the streets and remove their limbs with machetes. But I worry because I can't seem to get anyone to come to Sunday School. In the Philippines, most people live in houses constructed from cast off materials that are constantly being destroyed by storms. And I worry because no one attends Bible Study. In most parts of India, many people live on one meal a day with generally consists of rice with bits of flavoring. Yet, preachers roam from town to town setting up new churches and ministries in the midst of starvation and poverty. And I worry about our church finances. We live in a world where people are dying horrible deaths due to war,

starvation, and disease. And yet, we are more concerned about what happens in bedrooms among consenting adults.

“But preacher”, you say, “We can’t fix all those things. Please don’t try to make us feel guilty about it.” I’m not trying to make anyone feel guilty. What I want you to understand is that when we face these facts and the enormity of God’s Creation, how can we feel anything but humble and meek? As important as we find the things that we choose to interact with this world, at some point we have got to realize that life is so much more than riding a bull for nine seconds, having a million dollars in the bank, having the fastest and coolest car in town, or baking the best apple cobbler in the county. I will point out to you that those things do not and never will impress God. He’s happy that you can have and those things, but it isn’t your purpose.

When we start to feel haughty and better than those around us, I want us to lean into these words from David. You are familiar with them. It would be a good thing to commit this Psalm to memory so that it is always on the tip of your tongue:

Psalm 51

- 1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness;
According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my
transgressions.**
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from min iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.**

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions:

And my sin is ever before me.

4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight:

That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity;

And in sin did my mother conceive me.

6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts:

And in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean:

Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness;

That the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins,

And blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God;

And renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence;

And take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;

And uphold me with thy free spirit.

13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways;

And sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation:

And my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15 O Lord, open thou my lips;

And my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it:

Thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:

A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion:

Build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

**19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with
burnt offering and whole burnt offering:**

Then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

There is no hint of pride, arrogance, or self-promotion in those words. It is in that place of extreme humbleness that we find the virtue of meekness and what it means. It is that place where we stand before our maker in humility, asking forgiveness, though we deserve none, and allow his spirit to take charge and prove to us that we can embrace meekness. By doing so, God can change the world through us. Through meekness, we will inherit this world, purged of self-righteousness and personal glory. And like Micah said, “We will be able to walk humbly with our God.” For when we walk humbly with God, we don’t choose to walk in front of God, or behind God, or even at God’s side. Instead, we allow God to choose to walk in front of us, behind us or at our side; and when we fall, to pick us up and carry us in his arms.

God bless you all,

AMEN

Quotes:

<https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/meek-quotes>

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