

Sermon on the Mount #4
Blessed are the Meek!

Matthew 5:3-12

I. Sermon on the Mount: Brief Refresher (Mt.5:48)

A. Jesus' called us to pursue a lifestyle of obedience that seeks to be perfected (mature in obedience). Walking mature in our obedience is relative in this age and absolute in the age-to-come. In this age, we never attain to perfection in the absolute sense. We are to walk in the fullness of the light that we receive from the Spirit. This includes declaring war on all our lust that the Spirit reveals.

Mt. 5:48 You shall be perfect (walk in all the light you receive) as your Father...is perfect.

B. The pursuit of 100-fold obedience includes making a covenant with our eyes (Ps. 101:3; Job 31:1), bridling our speech (Jas 3:2; Eph. 4:29-5:4), managing our time (for service and prayer with the Word, (Eph. 5:15-16) and money to increase the Kingdom beyond our personal comfort and honor (Mt. 6:19-21) as we engage in communing prayer with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14).

C. In the sermon on the mount Jesus gave six practical areas in which we must wage war against lust (1 Pet. 2:11): anger (spirit of murder, Mt. 5:21-26), adultery (spirit of immorality, Mt. 5:27-30), disregarding the sanctity of marriage (spirit of treachery, Mal. 2:13-17 or disloyalty that disregards the sanctity of marriage, Mt. 5:31-32), false commitments (spirit of manipulation that seeks to promote ourselves, Mt. 5:33-37). To use "spin" to present ourselves in a false way about our commitments in the past and the present (by lack of follow through), demanding personal justice (spirit of pride or bitterness that insists on our personal rights, Mt. 5:38-41) and refusing to retaliate (spirit of revenge or animosity in relationships, Mt. 5:42-47).

D. Jesus also describes five "grace-releasing activities" in our secret life that position our heart to receive more strength in the grace of God. Our heart receives more grace as we consistently and secretly serve and give (charitable deeds: giving service and/or money (6:1-4, 19-21), pray (6:5-13), bless adversaries (forgiving, 6:14-15; 5:44) and fast (6:16-18). The progressive working out of this lifestyle within the context of our devotional life as the Holy Spirit disciplines us into someone that resembles Jesus and brings glory to God is what happens when these methods are embraced and pursued.

II. The Eight Beatitudes: Brief Definitions (Mt. 5:3-12)

Introduction: True spiritual reality is defined by the 8 beatitudes. This is the character of Jesus, true christlikeness! These describe what pleases God and what Jesus has in mind for creation and will duplicate in the nations through His ministry as King. Implied in all of God's commands is the promise of the enabling grace to walk out the command. Thus, all eight beatitudes are a part of our inheritance. God will bless the pursuit and progressive attainment of these 8 expressions of grace in the heart.

A. Being poor in spirit (theirs is the kingdom of heaven, Mt. 5:3) – to acknowledge that we are in great need of help to sustain wholeheartedness. This is to understand, that we are in a serious dilemma in needing a breakthrough (insight/power) in our heart for godliness.

B. Mourning for breakthrough (for they shall be comforted, Mt. 5:4) – to be convinced (grieved) at the human condition and our personal inability to live the Christ life, and to be desperate enough to be "extreme" in our pursuit of a progressive breakthrough of insight (revelation) and power (divine enablement) in our heart and ministry.

C. Walking in meekness (shall inherit the earth, Mt. 5:5) – to walk in the fasted lifestyle (voluntary weakness) or to have a servant spirit in the use of our natural strengths (time, money, energy, reputation, authority, etc.). Humility or meekness speaks of using our resources with a servant spirit, as we lay down personal rights in serving without regard for receiving the reward (honor, money) from people.

D. Hungering for righteousness (for they shall be filled, Mt. 5:6) – sustained faithfulness in seeking God with wholeheartedness through changing circumstances and seasons of our life.

E. Relating to others with mercy (for they shall obtain mercy, Mt. 5:7) – having a tender spirit in how we treat others in light of receiving God's mercy in our many failures (Ps. 18:35; 130:3-4).

F. Being pure in heart (they shall see God, Mt. 5:8) – breakthrough of purity in our thoughts (bitterness, immorality) and motives (helping people for their benefit without any personal gain).

G. Becoming an anointed peacemaker (called sons of God, Mt. 5:9) – anointing to bring peace (reconciliation) to that which is out of God's will (restoring relationships, bodies, legislation).

H. Enduring persecution (theirs is the kingdom, Mt. 5:10-12) – bearing the counterattack for plundering Satan's Kingdom because we operate in the power of grace and stand for righteousness.

III. The Eight Beatitudes: Blessed are the Meek! (for they shall be comforted!)

Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.

A. The Meekness which is spoken of here as a character of the divine life, has nothing to do with a lack of strength or ability. Rather, Meekness is strength under restraint or power that is brought under the control of another (Holy Spirit). It is translated as meekness, humility or gentleness!

Illustration: The horse that has become trained to the bit and bridle or domesticated!

B. The Holy Spirit in His purpose to disciple us into the image of Jesus is leading us into a place of "not by might or by power, but by my Spirit says God"! That is to say that He is "breaking" us of all natural assets and abilities in order to get things done to the point that we are relying on nothing but His anointing to accomplish the work of the kingdom.

Colossians 1:16-17 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

C. Moses (Deliverer, to draw out), is a type (or picture) of Jesus and a strong example of the character of meekness manifested in the servant leadership that is to be the model in the kingdom. Look at the contrast in the following descriptions of Moses in the scripture.

The first description by Stephan as told by Luke:

Acts 7:22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.

1. Mighty in worldly wisdom: history, math, science, leadership
2. Mighty in words: a talker, communicator, orator
3. Mighty in worldly works: recognized accomplishments, building projects, feats of strength?

The second description as told by Moses himself:

Numbers 12:3 (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.)

D. Moses' life is divided into three forty-year categories: First in Egypt, gaining strength or becoming a somebody; Second in the wilderness, losing strength or becoming a nobody; and Third leading Israel, staying a nobody used mightily by the Ultimate Somebody. This is meekness!

Exodus 32:10 Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation."

E. Jesus, the Unique and Preeminent One, although co-existent, co-eternal, and co-equal with the Father and the Spirit, in meekness chose to become the God-Man according to the eternal plan of God. Voluntarily humbling Himself and not grasping to keep equality but rather becoming a servant, he has purchased salvation for men and redeemed the planet and makes intercession now as a resurrected Man at the right hand of the throne of God.

Philippians 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. NIV

F. The only thing recorded that Jesus said or brought attention to about Himself in regards to His perfect character, has to do with the fact of His meekness.

Matthew 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

G. It begins to dawn on our understanding that even greater than the recorded miracles of Jesus in the scripture are the miracles He could have done and was restrained in His obedience to the Father and the Spirit in meekness from doing. Perfect power under perfected restraint is the meekness of Christ.

Luke 4:2-4 ...being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. 3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." 4 But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

John 11:43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"

H. Meekness is the prophesied reality of the Messiah and the manifested purpose of God's kingdom here on earth in this age and in the age to come.

Zech 9:9 "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Matt 21:5 "Tell the daughter of Zion, behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Zeph 3:11-12 In that day you shall not be shamed for any of your deeds in which you transgress against Me; for then I will take away from your midst those who rejoice in your pride, and you shall no longer be haughty in My holy mountain. 12 I will leave in your midst a meek and humble people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

I: It is the testimony of the Holy Spirit in not speaking of Himself but in meekness to speak only what He hears in obedience to the Father as He glorifies the Son!

John 16:13-14 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

I. Meekness is what the Father is looking to establish in a prepared bride for His Son!

1 Peter 3:4 ...rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

J. The hope for corporate unity with in the body of Christ as well as in any lasting relationship is found in the establishment of meekness in the individual saint by the work of the Spirit on the heart.

Eph 4:1-4 ...therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace

1 Peter 3:15-17 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; 16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. 17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.