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**Matthew 5:5 | Spiritual Meekness**

July 3, 2022

**WELCOME:**

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 5.
- Bibles in back—our gift to you.

**REVIEW:**

We continue our study of Matthew's Gospel today.

For the last two weeks we have examined the first two Beatitudes.

These Beatitudes begin the greatest sermon ever preached—the Sermon On the Mount by Jesus Christ Himself.

The Beatitudes are the group of statements that start with— “blessed are.”

Jesus says...

***Blessed are the poor in spirit,***

Last week...***Blessed are those who mourn,***

Today...***Blessed are the humble/meek,***

Jesus uses the word “Blessed,” as a divine blessing.

It's a happiness that can only come from Heaven.

Jesus reiterates this idea of a divine blessing nine times in the first twelve verses.

Last Sunday, we looked at verse four—

**Matthew 5:4**—*Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.*

We usually have several take-aways/keypoints each week.

But last Sunday, we didn't have 1, 2, or even 3—

We had ten key points that came out of this one verse!

Isn't that amazing? So cool!

Why so much application from only one Beatitude?

**Hebrews 4:12**—*For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

The fact that there are so many things to ponder from just one sentence in Scripture proves that you can't wear this book out.

We're always learning something new.

And that's why our middle name is Bible.

Let's review from last week:

### **LW KEYPOINT 1**

*There is a type of human sadness that leads to divine happiness.*

That sadness comes when we mourn over our sin before a holy God.

We discussed how —

### **LW KEYPOINT 2**

*God designed us to shed tears.*

Crying is nothing to apologize for because it releases pain.

Sorrow is a part of God's design and healing process.

### **LW KEYPOINT 3**

*Biblical mourning focuses on God.*

It does not focus on ourselves or our sin.

We also discussed how we see a progression of divine happiness based on our obedience—

**Matthew 5:4**—*Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.*

The action of mourning leads to God's blessing.

In other words, God's comfort comes after we mourn over sin.

We must obey the first part of the verse to receive the blessings of the second.

As Our mourning leads us to God's comfort, and God's comfort then leads to our happiness/blessedness.

And then we asked this question—

*"Why is there happiness when we mourn over our sin?"*

### **LW KEYPOINT 4**

*Mourning over sin purges our guilt from sin.*

God doesn't want us dragging a suitcase of guilt around.

That's why confession is so important.

We don't stay in this place mourning over the same sin—sulking—beating ourselves up over it.

No, we mourn our sin and confess that sin, and make things right as far as it depends on us—and move on.

How do we know this?

The Apostle Paul said...

**Philippians 3:13**—*Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead,*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Mourning over our sin sets up for the next Beatitude today.

Over the past three weeks, we have learned that spiritual poverty leads us to spiritual sadness.

Today, spiritual sadness leads us to another characteristic of the Christian life—spiritual meekness.

Jesus said...

**Matthew 11:29**—*Take up my yoke and learn from me, because I am (gentle) lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

Now, we know that Jesus is gentle, meek and humble.

But Jesus' disciples were not used to this concept at all.

So let me give you a quick background to the <sup>world</sup> ~~culture~~ the Disciples lived in before we look at this Beatitude.

One of the primary things to know is that the Jews were expecting a conquering King—

They were looking for a mighty Messiah to deliver them out of the hands of the Romans.

Messiah means, “*The anointed one from God.*”

The Jews thought their Messiah would come to set them free from the political bondage they’ve been in most of their lives.

The Jews clearly understood military power.

They knew that their military power came from YHWH.

The Jews reveled in the glory days of Joshua.

Josh led the nation by conquering all these pagan cities as they entered the Promised Land.

Unfortunately, the Jew's misunderstanding of their Hebrew Bible led them to believe that their freedom would come through power, violence, and more shed blood—because that’s what they were used to.

So, when Jesus arrived on the scene ~~and preached:~~ *He shook them by preaching*

***Blessed are the poor in spirit***— He’s revealing their spiritual pride.

***Blessed are the those who mourn***—He’s revealing a godly response to their spiritual pride.

***Blessed are the humble/meek***—So today, Jesus reveals how to live a life worth living—a godly life that leads to a heavenly inheritance.

But the Jews did not want a meek, mild, gentle Messiah.

What kind of leader can be meek and mild and have the power that's needed to lead them out of the hands of the Romans?

This Beatitude is shocking because the Jews spent much of their time defending their own holiness and self-righteousness.

This Beatitude of humility/meekness was a joke to the Jews...and you know what?

It's one of the reasons that they eventually murdered Him.

They didn't want meek and mild Jesus Christ.

They wanted a zealot like Jesus Barabbas.

And Barabbas is who they got.

The good news for us, as non-Jews, we are Gentiles—we got Jesus on the rebound.

Jesus said, "Fine, you guys don't want me—I'll go to the Gentiles and talk to you in riddles/parables."

And since we got Jesus on the rebound, we will not ignore His words today.

We want to put Jesus' words into practice.

We want to experience God verse by verse this morning so that we can share the Gospel day by day.

So with that introduction...

*\*Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.\**

**SCRIPTURE: Matthew 5:5 CSB**

**Matthew 5:1**— When he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him.

**Matthew 5:2**— Then he began to teach them, saying:

**Matthew 5:3**— “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

**Matthew 5:4**— Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

**Matthew 5:5**— Blessed are the humble, for they will inherit the earth.

**Matthew 5:6**— Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

**Matthew 5:7**— Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

**Matthew 5:8**— Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

**Matthew 5:9**— Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

**Matthew 5:10**— Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

*\*\*This is the Word of the Lord for River Bible Church.*

**EXEGESIS:**

**Matthew 5:5**— *Blessed are the humble,  
for they will inherit the earth.*

Jesus starts this Beatitude—this proclamation of truth by paraphrasing...

**Psalm 37:11**—*But the humble will inherit the land  
and will enjoy abundant prosperity.*

The Hebrew word for humble is (ah-nav) *anav* and implies a power that's under control.

Your translation may read, "***Blessed are the meek or gentle.***"

Meekness is slightly different than humbleness, although these English terms overlap in meaning.

It's important to see the difference, so let's take a look.

Humility deals with how we see ourselves.

Humility is the opposite of pride and arrogance.

Meekness specifically means "to be low."

Meekness is humility, but its added ingredient is gentleness.

And it's that gentleness that lifts up and serves others.

The Greek term for humility and meekness is (Pry-ese) ***praiûs***.



*Praîs* paints a picture of:

- Nature: Something that is mild—like a pleasant breeze on a hot and humid day. Meekness is refreshing.
- Medicinal: To use medicine correctly is a form of meekness, because if you misuse medicine it has the power to make you sick or even kill.
- Jurisprudence: A government should be gentle with its own people but cautious and even stern with others to protect its own.
- Animal Kingdom: Think of the power and beauty of wild horse (stallion). Meekness points to when the animal has been broken. There is still the same amount of power within that animal— but meekness displays all that power under the control of its master.

The Greeks valued this virtue of meekness and gentleness as long as there was compensating strength.

This idea of meekness today comes with a lot misunderstanding.

We rarely if ever use that term meek in our vocabulary today.

But it is an important term.

Because if we don't understand this Beatitude, we'll roll our eyes.

We tend to think of meekness as weakness.

We're inclined to believe that meekness describes someone who doesn't have a backbone.

But that is not the biblical concept of meekness at all.

It's not spinelessness.

Meekness doesn't mean someone has a soft personality. Instead, it means that this person has a soft heart for people.

Those who are meek, are strong people who refuse to dominate others—even though they could.

The meek person doesn't assert himself over others.

He gets low to lift others up.

Jesus washing the Disciples feet is an example of meekness. (John 13)

Jesus even washed the feet of Judas.

### **KEYPOINT #1:**

*Meekness is a definitive quality of a strong person.*

We see this throughout the OT.

**Micah 6:8 NLT**—the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

We see how meekness and humility are the fruits of salvation. Look at this:

**Psalm 149:4**—For the Lord takes pleasure in his people; he adorns the humble with salvation.

In other words, He clothes them with humility and eternal life.

We also can't witness without meekness and humility.

**1 Peter 3:15, 16**— (be) ready at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. Yet do this with gentleness and reverence,

Meekness is a prerequisite to God's blessing.

**Isaiah 66:2**—I will look favorably on this kind of person: *—What kind?*  
 one who is humble, submissive in spirit, and trembles at my word.

And it's this kind of person that God chooses to be His leaders throughout Scripture.

Let's look at meekness and humility in action.

In the book of Numbers, we read a story about Aaron and Miriam.

Aaron and Miriam are the brother and sister of Moses.

And they start talking—they begin to run their mouths.

They like to hear the sound of their own voices as they complain about this and that.

Then they both start to complain about Moses—

**Numbers 12:2**—They said, "Does the Lord speak only through Moses? Does he not also speak through us?" And the Lord heard it.

**Numbers 12:3**— Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth.

**Numbers 12:4**— And suddenly the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, "Come out, you three, ..."

So God, literally, has a come to Jesus meeting with Aaron and Miriam while Moses watches God defend him.

Why does God defend Moses?

Because Moses doesn't defend himself.—Moses is meek!

And because Moses is meek, God looks favorably upon him.

Remember the calling of Moses? The burning bush?

YHWH tells Moses he's the chosen man who will deliver millions of people from slavery.

**Exodus 3:11**—But Moses asked God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

In other words, Moses is saying, "You got the wrong guy, God."

Remember the Golden Calf incident?

Moses and Joshua have been on Mount Sinai with YHWH, receiving the Ten Commandments.

While Moses and Josh are up on the mountain—

The rest of the Israelites get bored—impatient at the bottom of the hill.

Someone has the great idea to throw a party—

Things quickly get out of control, and all the artists in the group start to create their own god—a golden calf.

**Exodus 32:19**—As Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses became enraged and threw the tablets out of his hands, smashing them at the base of the mountain.

**Exodus 32:20**— He took the calf they had made, burned it up and ground it to powder. He scattered the powder over the surface of the water and forced the Israelites to drink the water.

Wow, I thought a meek person wasn't supposed to get angry!

Meek people do get angry—but it's for the right reason.

Why would Moses take the time to burn gold into power and make them drink it?

Because God's own people disrespected the One True Living God.

Moses will not tolerate people disrespecting God.

So, Moses provides a natural laxative so they can think these over.

King David is another meek man—not a perfect man. *Either is Moses*

He struggles with his power at times.

There's a little story tucked away in 2 Samuel that shows the overwhelming humility of David.

**2 Samuel 16:5**— When King David got to Bahurim, a man belonging to the family of the house of Saul was just coming out. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he was yelling curses as he approached.

This little story in the Bible is rated R.

Shimei is some kind of upset. He's not only screaming profanities at David, but look what he does next—

**2 Samuel 16:6**— He threw stones at David and at all the royal servants, the people and the warriors on David's right and left.

Shimei is *Physically Assaulting* hurling stones at Marines.

He's either a complete idiot or so mad he can't think straight.

**2 Samuel 16:7**— Shimei said *as he cursed*, "Get out, get out, you man of bloodshed, you wicked man!"

**2 Samuel 16:8**— The Lord has paid you back for all the blood of the house of Saul in whose place you became king, and the Lord has handed the kingdom over to your son Absalom. Look, you are in trouble because you're a man of bloodshed!"

**2 Samuel 16:9**— Then Abishai ...said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and remove his head!"

Abishai sounds like a young David with Goliath.

Now, I don't know about you, but I like Abishai.

He's a man of conviction.

**2 Samuel 16:10**— The king replied, ... "He curses me this way *because the Lord told him*, 'Curse David!'"

**2 Samuel 16:11**— Then David said to Abishai and all his servants, "Look, my own son, *my own flesh and blood*, intends to take my life—how much more now this Benjaminite! Leave him alone and let him curse me; the Lord has told him to.

What would you have done if you were David?

I'm assuming that most of us would have said, "*Sick him Abishai, sick him.*"

If we didn't say it, we would have thought it.

David didn't do that.

He revealed that he was a man of meekness—a man who knew how to control his emotions and power.

David didn't care to defend himself.

David didn't feel the need to defend his own reputation.

He didn't try to talk things out and convince Shimei of anything.

David chose not to focus on himself but to focus on God. Amazing!

In other words, David said, "Maybe God told him <sup>to call me names,</sup> ~~to do~~ this. Maybe I need to be humbled. Maybe this a test."

Let's fast forward to the NT.

Our Lord Jesus Himself was the perfect example of power under control.

Let's look at some theology/christology today.

When we look at the person and work of Jesus Christ, we can't help but see His power that was under His control.

**Philippians 2:5**—Adopt the same attitude (meekness) as that of Christ Jesus,

**Philippians 2:6**—who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be exploited.

Jesus did not use His power to crush people—

He used His power to save people.

And we see how Jesus does that in verse seven.

**Philippians 2:7**—Instead he emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity. And when he had come as a man,

**Philippians 2:8**—he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death— even to death on a cross.

And because Jesus was meek, He will come back as a conquering King.

One of the most famous stories <sup>About Meekness</sup> in the Gospels is when Jesus cleans out the Temple for the first time.

**John 2:13**— The Jewish Passover was near, and so Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

**John 2:14**— In the temple he found people selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and he also found the money changers sitting there.

People are not using the Temple as God designed it.

Instead of praying, they are using the Temple for their own benefit.

So what's Jesus do next?

**John 2:15a**— After making a whip out of cords, Jesus drove everyone out of the temple with their sheep and oxen.

So let's get this straight, Jesus becomes angry makes a weapon—Why?

Because the religious leaders have turned the Temple into a shopping mall.



They have disrespected His Father.

That kind of disrespect comes with consequences.

So Jesus goes all Indiana Jones on these guys.

**John 2:15b**— <sup>Jesus</sup> ~~He~~ also poured out the money changers' coins and overturned the tables.

**John 2:16**— He told those who were selling doves, "Get these things out of here!"

**John 2:17**— And his disciples remembered that it is written: **Zeal for your house will consume me**

The zeal Jesus had was for The Father—not for Himself.

Jesus wasn't drawing attention to Himself.

His power was unleashed because of blatant sin and disrespect for His Father's house.

So Jesus showed strength when strength was needed.

But when it wasn't needed, Jesus was gentle.

We see Jesus being gentle with the woman at the well and with the woman who committed adultery.

It's in these examples to where see meekness in action.

All these narratives state the same thing—

**KEYPOINT #2:**

*Meekness is not the absence of self-confidence and self-assertiveness—it's the absence of self!*

We see this again when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

Jesus did not ride in on a white stallion as a conquering King like Solomon.

Instead, Jesus rode on a donkey—with no army and no earthly crown.

And yet <sup>Jesus</sup> He is the one who spoke the cosmos into existence.

Another great example is the night Jesus is arrested, Peter pulls a sword and starts whacking people's ears off.

Jesus says, Pete, where are you doing?

Don't you realize all I have to do is call on my Father, and He'll give me twelve legions of angels to fight this battle?

A Roman legion contains about 6,000 men.

It's also recorded in 2 Kings 19:35 that one angel killed 185,000 pagan soldiers.

And Jesus has 72,000 angels at His disposal.

In other words, Pete, I don't need your help.

<sup>did Jesus call on His Father</sup>  
Why? Because Jesus is meek.

He has all the power, and all His power is under His control.

A meek person seeks the Glory of God above everyone and everything else.

And Jesus was doing exactly that.

**Zephaniah 2:3**—Seek the Lord, all you humble of the earth,  
who carry out what he commands.

Seek righteousness, seek humility;

The child of God pursues meekness and strives for humility.

The proud person does not.

And that's why the world spends so much time defending itself.

**KEYPOINT #3:**

*Proud people will always disobey God and disrespect others by defending themselves.*

It's the world that justifies its <sup>sinful</sup> behavior.

It's the world that defends their rights,

It's the world that serves their own needs.

On the other hand, a meek person defends God no matter the personal cost to him  
—whether it's embarrassment or persecution.

A meek person doesn't defend himself, but will die defending God.

God can't do anything with someone who is not meek.

At the end of the day, humility is about the sovereignty of God.

Because a meek person trusts God and realizes that He is in complete control of the outcomes.

God's in control. We're not.

We only have the illusion of control many times.

**Matthew 5:5**— *Blessed are the humble,  
for they will inherit the earth.*

The emphatic pronoun *autos* (**they**) is again used (see vv. 3, 4).

It shows us that only those who are meek and humble **will inherit the earth.**

A meek person will receive his allotted portion, his inheritance.

That's the positive side.

The negative is that those who are proud and arrogant won't.

The proud, arrogant and unrepentant person inherits something else—

And that is eternal judgment in a very real place called hell.

### **PREACH**

So the question becomes, "Am I passing the test of meekness/humility?"

When I look into the rear view mirror of my life, do I see this characteristic of meekness in my life?

But here's another question—How do we know if we're meek?

*The answer lies in more questions*

How do I respond when I'm offended?

What do I do when someone disrespects me?

Do I say, "sick him Abishai."

Or do I respond as King David did?

- Don't worry  
- Let him curse me - who cares?

**PRAY/Benediction:**

Rev 5:12-13

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power &  
wealth & wisdom & honor & glory & blessing!

To Him who sits on the throne & to the Lamb

be blessing & honor & glory & might forever & ever!

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Tommy Nelson, Denton Bible Church. Matthew 5:1-12