

The Meek Shall Inherit The Earth
Matthew 5:5

What is meekness? It's leveraging your power to serve others and not exalt yourself. It's Jesus washing the disciples' feet. He deserved the spot of Lord and Master, yet he took the role of a servant. But, because He did this, Paul explains in Philippians 2, "*God exalted him and gave him the name above every name.*" Philippians 2:9

When you take the role of servant— meekness, 2nd place—God exalts you.

How would your life look different if you always put yourself in the 2nd place and trusted God to take care of you?

Embedded in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount are eight principles for spiritual growth and also eight blessings for a blessed life here on earth. The word blessed means true happiness, not the kind of happiness that circumstances can change or someone can steal away, but true happiness that only comes from God and no one can take away because it doesn't depend on any circumstances.

Today He's going to tell us that the really happy people are the meek.

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

How is it possible for the meek to be blessed in a world of the survival of the fittest? The world says it is the proud, the tough, and the aggressive who inherit the earth. People don't brag about being meek. What Jesus is teaching in Matthew 5:5 is "The way up is down, and the path to greatness is through humility."

What do you think of when you hear the word meek? Weak, right? When you think of someone who is meek, we usually think of someone who is soft, who is not that tough. Someone who lets everyone run over them like a doormat. We think of someone who is passive, someone who is easily imposed upon, and spinelessness. Someone who is placid and dull and usually boring.

Meekness is not weakness. The word "meek" has lost all its original meaning in our culture today. We need to look at how Jesus used the word "meek" and remember that words change. Words go through a metamorphosis. For example, in 1710, Sir Christopher Wren had been working on St. Paul's Cathedral in London for over 35 years. Queen Anne had never seen the edifice. Sir Christopher Wren took her to see it. She looked around the magnificent structure and said, "It's awful. It's amusing. It's artificial," but in 1710, the word "awful" meant "awe inspiring." The word "amusing" meant "amazing." The word "artificial" meant "artistic."

What was the original meaning when Jesus said "Blessed are the meek"? He meant, "Blessed are those whose strength is under control." It is a word picture of a wild stallion who is powerful and strong and beautiful but untamed. It's a wild animal that is out of control, and then an expert comes along and breaks the stallion, tames the stallion. and now the power and beauty and strength is harnessed for good and productivity, and so it's strength under control. Meek means to be broken of your self-will.

The word meek was also used when a medicine would be offered, when a strong medicine was tamed down with water or something else to make it healthy for the body. The word meek was also used for a gentle breeze. The idea was something that is tamed, whose power was under control. Medicine is good if it is mild, but if you take too much, it will take your life. A breeze is refreshing, but if it is too strong it will become a hurricane. A wild animal that is unbroken is dangerous but once it is broken, the animal is effective and helpful. In the New Testament the word "meek" means "God-tamed."

Moses is described in Numbers 12:3 as the meekest man in all the world. Do you think of Moses as being meek? Moses, in a moment of wrath in his youth, killed an Egyptian. As Moses came down from the mountain with the Ten Commandments and saw the sin of the people, he broke the Commandments – but yet Moses is meek. It's because he was God-molded, God-shaped, God-formed, and God-tempered.

Carl Sandburg, speaking about Abraham Lincoln, said, "Lincoln is a man of steel and velvet." He was someone who has great power but has that power under control.

Probably the best place to begin to understand meekness is in Psalm 37 because it is almost certain that this beatitude is a quotation or allusion in Psalm 37:11, which says, "*The meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity.*"

The word for "land" in Greek and Hebrew also means "earth." In Psalm 37:9 it says, "*Those who wait for the Lord shall possess the land.*" Psalm 37:9

1. The Meek Find Their Contentment In God.

We wear ourselves out trying to make sure that everybody thinks we're good and that we've got it all together. Biblical meekness is rooted in the deep confidence that God is for you and not against you.

Contentment is an expression of happiness. The meek are not restless with the need of finding something to satisfy them more than what they already have. The meek find happiness in the knowledge that they are under God's control.

"Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart." Psalm 37:3-4

Someone has observed that most of our unhappiness in life comes from not liking ourselves. If you don't get along with yourself, you're not going to get along with anybody else. Ask yourself today, "Are you content with who you are? Or are you always comparing yourself to somebody else, and competing with them wanting to be what they are?" The meek person is blessed because he's content. Imagine not be upset about where you're at in life right now.

Contentment doesn't mean you're satisfied to the point where you never want change, but it means satisfied to the point where you're not disturbed about where you're at right now. To be content means that if God has another plan for you, God can make it come to pass. God can do in a moment what we cannot do in a lifetime.

2. The Meek Make Their Commitment To God.

"Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun." Psalm 37:5-6

The Hebrew word for "commit" means to "roll." Meek people have discovered that God is trustworthy, and so they roll their "way" — their business, their problems, their relationships, their health, their fears, their frustrations — they roll everything onto the Lord. They admit that they are insufficient to cope with the challenges and pressures and obstacles of life, and they trust that God is able and willing to sustain them and guide them and protect them.

Jesus was the ultimate model of meekness. Even in the face of His arrest and trial, He was power under control.

"Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: 'The one that I kiss is the man that you should arrest.' Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, 'Greetings, Rabbi,' and he kissed him. Then the men stepped forward seized

Jesus and arrested him. With that, one of Jesus' companions, who happened to be Peter, reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back in its place, for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. Do you think that I cannot call on my father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?' " Matthew 26:48-54

Jesus was saying, "If I don't want to go through this, I don't have to, Peter. I don't need you to cut off somebody's ear." Jesus healed the man's ear. That's one of the best examples of meekness that we can find in the scripture. Jesus said, "I don't have to let them capture me." Jesus did not have to do what He did for us. He chose to do it in obedience to His Father.

The Meek Commit Their Way to God. Meek people begin by trusting God.

3. The Meek Receive Their Comfort From God.

"Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways." Psalm 37:7

The meek have discovered that God can be trusted. Then, they commit their way to him. Then, they wait patiently in stillness for God to work.

Meek people are free of frenzy. They have a steady calm that comes from knowing that God is omnipotent, that He has their affairs under His control, and that He is gracious and will work things out for the best. Meek people have a quiet steadiness about their lives in the midst of upheaval.

- **The Meek Don't Live In Fear**

"...do not fret when people succeed in their ways." Psalm 37:7

They know their family and work and life are in God's sovereign hands. They trust Him and wait patiently to quietly to see how His power and goodness will work things out. So, the setbacks and obstacles and opponents of life do not produce the kind of bitterness and anger and fretfulness that is so common among people. The meek person submits to God!

While events in life may not always be under control, the meek person has his own spirit under control. The meek are humble people, and they have no need to prove their strength to others. They simply exhibit their quiet strength through the character of their lives!

The meek or humble person seeks to raise others above themselves. Those we have viewed as "great" men and women have displayed a unique meekness in their lives.

4. The Meek Collect Their Compensation From The Lord.

"A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity." Psalm 37:10-11

What does it mean that the meek will "*inherit the earth*?"

The Message translation says, "*You're blessed when you're content with just who you are—no more, no less. That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought.*" Matthew 5:5

A meek person has the things that can't be bought with money. What are some of those things? You can't buy peace or joy. You may be able to buy a little bit of fun, but fun only lasts while it's fun. When the fun's over, then that doesn't mean that you have any joy. Joy is so much deeper than fun. You can't buy a deep satisfaction

in your soul of being content with who you are, and where God has you in life right now. You can't buy a sense of being right with God. God offers that to us through our faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus took our sin, and He gave us His right standing with God through our faith in Him. These blessings cannot be bought, but they can come to a meek person. I don't need to compete with other people. I don't need to compare myself with other people. I am satisfied with what God has created.

- God Is The Owner Of This Earth.

“The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters. Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place?” Psalm 24:1

Those who obey Christ become children of God (Galatians 3:27; Hebrews 5:9), and joint heirs with the Lord (Romans 8:17). The Father supplies all our needs (Philippians 4:19), and we enjoy this earth and its blessings more than all others. We are heirs in the kingdom of Christ (Ephesians 5:5), and citizenship in that kingdom is available now on this earth (John 3:3-5; Colossians 1:13).

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you.” 1 Peter 1:3

In the future, the meek will inherit the earth at Christ's coming. When God created the earth, He gave dominion of it to man. However, when Adam sinned, paradise was lost. Satan became the prince of this world, and sin brought this world into bondage. Instead of staying in a state of newness and fruitfulness, it decays, grows thorns, and causes pain. However, one day, at Christ's return, He will give the world again to the meek. At that time, there will be a renewal of the earth—the lion will lie down with the lamb, the cow will feed with the bear, and children will lead them (Isaiah 11). There will be perfect peace in the world. Paradise will be ruled by the meek, as they are co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17).

But there is also a present inheritance that abundantly enriches our earthly existence. The world is constantly ruled by the spirit of more. They need the newest phone, the newest laptop, the newest clothes, and the newest car, and therefore never really possess anything. Instead, things possess them. To inherit the earth means to be given strength to face the disease that has afflicted you. To inherit the earth is to know the fullness of love and companionship with my wife and family. To inherit the earth is to know friendship based on love and respect rather than what someone can do for me. To inherit the earth is to be at peace with God.

“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” James 4:6

He took Moses, who was the meekest man on the earth, and put him in leadership over his chosen people. He took Joseph from slavery and prison and made him second in command over Egypt. He took David, a shepherd boy, and made him king over Israel. God blesses the meek and often gives them the land—leadership and authority—now.

“Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility.” Zephaniah 2:3

We're to seek humility and to seek meekness. These are not character traits that are natural to us. They're not even necessarily things that we can just pray for God to give us, and they just show up. Jesus was meek. We can learn meekness from Him.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” Matthew 11:29