

JULY 18, 2021 - STUDY GUIDE

THE MEEK

CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM

THE BEATITUDES

PART 4



BLESSED ARE THE MEEK

- Dan Sczebel

Matthew 5:5

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” - Matthew 5:5

I. What is Meekness?

Dictionary.com describes meekness as docile, overly compliant, spiritless, yielding or tame. Merriam-Webster define it as mild, deficient in courage, submissive and weak.

Modern day definitions of meekness hold an immensely different meaning from the spiritual connotation that is referenced in the Bible.

Greek: *praus* (**meek**) has the idea of the proper balance between anger and indifference, of a strong personality properly controlled, and of humility.

“In general the Greeks considered meekness a vice because they failed to distinguish it from servility. To be meek towards others implies freedom from malice and a vengeful spirit.” - D.A. Carson

Praus: “gentleness of attitude and behavior, in contrast with harshness in one’s dealings with

others – ‘gentleness, meekness, mildness.’” (Louw and Nida, *Semantic Lexicon of the New Testament*)

The Hebrew word for meek is *anaw*. It refers to someone who is afflicted or bearing a heavy burden. It is largely an explanation about the circumstance someone is willing to endure, rather than a state one surrenders to.

Moses, who was the meekest man to live in his day. For instance, Moses never complained to God about the grief Miriam and Aaron caused him. He simply choose to bear the burden.

“Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman. 2 And they said, “Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?” And the Lord heard it. 3 Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth.”

-Numbers 12:1-3

Describing those who are meek, scholarly F.F. Bruce speaks of people “who suffer wrong without bitterness or desire for revenge.” - F.F. Bruce

II. How is meekness manifested in our lives?

A. Developing Meekness is a work of God the Holy Spirit

Just as the gospel is necessary to change the heart to free us from the bondage of sin, *the Spirit works in us fervently to empower us to produce gospel fruit.*

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness [or ‘meekness’], self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” - Galatians 5:22-24

B. We also “seek” to put on the trait of meekness/humility

“Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands; seek righteousness; seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the Lord.” - Zephaniah 2:3

“As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.” - Colossians 3:12 (NRSV)

III. What does it look like to be meek before God?

It would appear at the very least the meek are in submission to the will of God and are pliable/flexible as his word brings change to our hearts.

A. Daniel exhibited his submission to the will of God to serve three pagan kings and was uncompromising in his devotion to God’s word. “But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king’s food, or with the wine that he drank.” - Daniel 1:8



B. “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.” - John 6:19

IV. What does a meek person look like who is meek before others?

They are strong – yet also humble, gentle, patient, and longsuffering

Jesus is our ultimate example: “And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments.” - Luke 23:34

“Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?” - Matt 26:53

V. What does it mean that the meek will inherit the earth?

The truth is we can only be meek, willing to control our desire for our rights and privileges because we are confident God watches out for us, that He will protect our cause. The promise “they shall inherit the earth” proves that God will not allow His meek ones to end up on the short end of the deal.

“It looks as if they would be pushed out of the world but they shall not be, ‘for they shall inherit the earth.’ The wolves devour the sheep, yet there are more sheep in the world than there are wolves, and the sheep, continue to multiply, and to feed in green pastures.” - C.H. Spurgeon

Daniel is wonderful example of this truth: As he was willing to speak the word of the Lord and live obediently in the will of God; all his needs were provided for and God promoted him to be His voice for three different pagan kings.

Life Group Discussion

(Questions 2 and 3 are adapted from John Stott’s Sermon on the Mount: Study Guide)

1. When you hear the word “meek” what comes to mind? Do you see it as a positive virtue? Why or why not?
2. Read Matthew 5:1-5. We have seen how there is a progression in the beatitudes up to this point. How would a true estimate of ourselves (5:3-4) lead us to develop into people who are “meek” – to have a gentle and humble attitude toward others?

3. From the world’s point of view, why is it surprising that the meek will inherit the earth?

4. Read **Psalm 37:1-13**.

a. This text seems to be in Jesus’ mind, standing in background of what he says here, with Jesus quoting directly from v.11. How does the promise that the meek will “inherit the earth”, coupled with the encouragement of this Psalm not to worry about the wicked, encourage you?

b. In what ways would we need to exercise deep trust in God if we are to take on meekness as a virtue?

5. Read Matthew 11:28-30 and 2 Corinthians 10:1. Jesus describes his ‘heart’ as being ‘meek’, using the exact same word in Matt 11 as in Matt 5. Paul, likewise, appeals based on the “meekness” of Jesus in 2 Cor 10. This reminds us that Jesus deals gently with us, not in harshness.

a. How have you experienced the gentleness of Jesus toward you?

b. In what areas of your life – in what relationships – do you need to be asking God to help you become more “gentle”?

Prayer: Take some time to thank Jesus for his meekness toward us – his gentleness and humility of heart. Pray for your group members, that you grow to deepen this trait of meekness in your life.