

Matthew 5:5 Commentary

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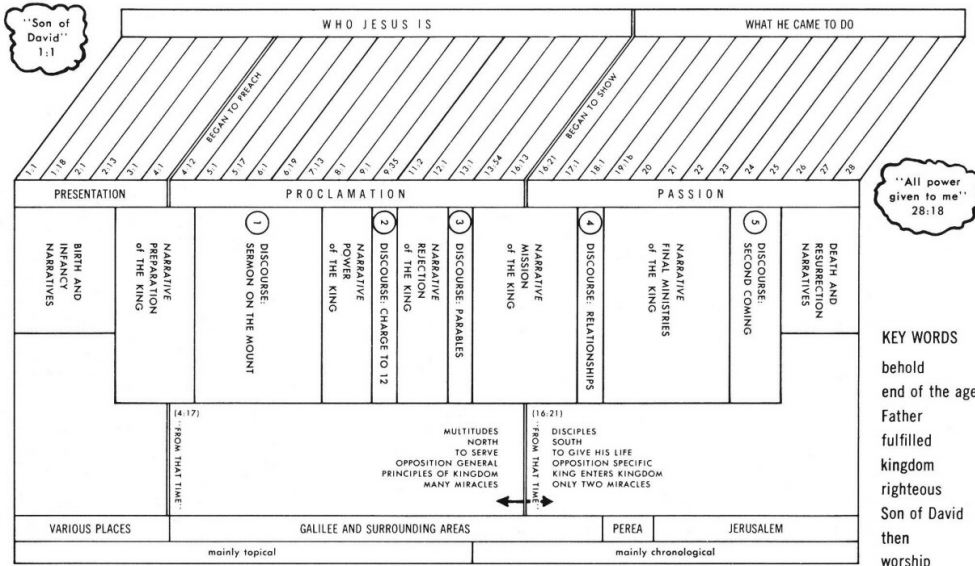
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MATTHEW CONTAINS 15 PARABLES 20 MIRACLES

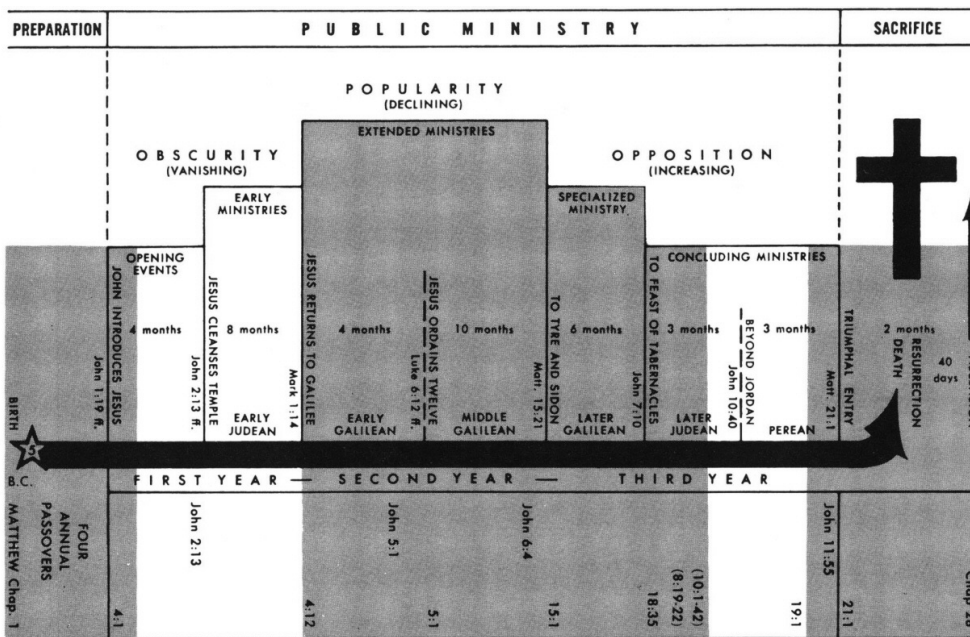
KEY VERSES: 1:1 "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

2:2 "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."



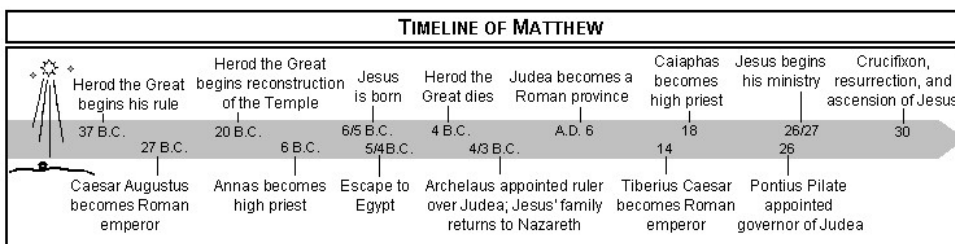
Click chart to enlarge
 Charts from Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission
 Another Chart from Charles Swindoll

THE LIFE OF JESUS AS COVERED BY MATTHEW (shaded area)



Click chart to enlarge

Jesus Birth and Early Years
 Leading up to the Sermon on the Mount
 Matthew 1-7



Source: Ryrie Study Bible

Greek: [makarioi oi praeis, hoti autoi kleronomesousin](#) (3PFA) [ten gen.](#)

Amplified: Blessed (happy, blithesome, joyous, spiritually prosperous—with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions) are the meek (the mild, patient, long-suffering), for they shall inherit the earth! ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

KJV: Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

NLT: God blesses those who are gentle and lowly, for the whole earth will belong to them. ([New Living Translation - Tyndale House](#))

Philips: Happy are those who claim nothing, for the whole earth will belong to them! ([New Testament in Modern English](#))

Wuest: Spiritually prosperous are those who are meek, because they themselves shall inherit the earth.

Young's Literal: `Happy (note no verb for "are") the meek--because they shall inherit the land.

BLESSED ARE THE GENTLE: makarioi hoi praeis:

- Mt 11:29; 21:5; Numbers 12:3; Psalms 22:26; 25:9; 69:32; *marg;; Psalms 147:6; 149:4; Isaiah 11:4; 29:19; 61:1; Zephaniah 2:3; Galatians 5:23; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:12; 1Timothy 6:11; 2Timothy 2:25; Titus 3:2; James 1:21; 3:13; 1Peter 3:4,15
- [Matthew 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Matthew 5:5: Happy are the Meek - Study Guide](#) - John MacArthur
- [Matthew 5:5: Happy are the Meek](#) - John MacArthur
- [Matthew 5:5: The Only Way to Happiness: Be Meek](#) - John MacArthur

Blessed (happy, blithesome, joyous, spiritually prosperous—with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions) are the meek (the mild, patient, long-suffering), for they shall inherit the earth! (Amplified)

Happy are those who claim nothing, for the whole earth will belong to them! (Philips)

William Barclay gives an extra "amplified" translation of this verse "O THE BLISS OF THE MAN WHO IS ALWAYS ANGRY AT THE RIGHT TIME AND NEVER ANGRY AT THE WRONG TIME, WHO HAS EVERY INSTINCT, AND IMPULSE, AND PASSION UNDER CONTROL BECAUSE HE HIMSELF IS GOD-CONTROLLED, WHO HAS THE HUMILITY TO REALISE HIS OWN IGNORANCE AND HIS OWN WEAKNESS, FOR SUCH A MAN IS A KING AMONG MEN!" ([Matthew 5 Commentary - Daily Study Bible -online](#))

Beloved, if you've had any doubt that the first two qualities (poverty of spirit, mourning over sins) Jesus calls His subjects to exhibit, then surely His charge for us to assume this naturally impossible trait of **meekness** should convince you to think otherwise. None of the character traits that Jesus mentions in the beatitudes are **natural traits** so by default they can only be supernaturally produced. **Gentleness** or **meekness** especially highlights the supernatural origin as it is mentioned as one of the components of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer.

Rod Mattoon - The third beatitude is even more difficult than the first two, because it involves the issue of our relationship with others and having self control. Following Christ and His example is not easy, but is possible through the power of the Holy Spirit. Living the Christian life without the Lord in your life is impossible, but we can do all things through Christ. It is the Lord who enables us to be meek and will reward those who are meek with a great inheritance when He returns. (Treasures from The Sermon on the Mount, Volume 1)

As **D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones** says "A man can never be meek unless he is poor in spirit. A man can never be meek unless he has seen himself as a vile sinner. These other things must come first. (Lloyd-Jones, D. M. [Studies in the Sermon on the Mount](#))

One needs to keep the historical context in mind when interpreting the meaning and significance of "blessed are the gentle (meek)". Remember that Jesus is speaking primarily to Jews in this sermon which was likely His first major message. Can you imagine the expectation that buzzed through the Jewish crowd as they prepared themselves to hear from their Messiah Who would lay out His plans to conquer the hated Roman oppressors! Nothing could have come to them as more of a shock than these eight beatitudes,

but this one, the third, must have been especially shocking. "Blessed are the meek". How much further from their expectation of a materialistic, military kingdom could Jesus' statement have been!

As **John MacArthur** writes "in whatever way various groups of people expected the Messiah to come, they did not anticipate His coming humbly and meekly. Yet those were the very attitudes that Jesus, the one whom John the Baptist had announced as the Messiah, was both teaching and practicing. The idea of a meek Messiah leading meek people was far from any of their concepts of the messianic kingdom. The Jews understood military power and miracle power. They even understood the power of compromise, unpopular as it was. But they did not understand the power of meekness. The people as a whole eventually rejected Jesus because He did not fulfill their messianic expectations... This strange preacher could hardly be the deliverer they were looking for. Great causes are fought by the proud, not the humble. You cannot win victories while mourning, and you certainly could never conquer Rome with meekness. In spite of all the miracles of His ministry, the people never really believed in Him as the Messiah, because He failed to act in military or miracle power against Rome... Jesus' teaching seemed new and unacceptable to most of His hearers simply because the Old Testament was so greatly neglected and misinterpreted. They did not recognize the humble and self-denying Jesus as the Messiah because they did not recognize God's predicted Suffering Servant as the Messiah. That was not the kind of Messiah they wanted. (MacArthur, J: [Matthew 1-7 Macarthur New Testament Commentary Chicago: Moody Press](#))

D Martyn Lloyd-Jones in his classic treatise on the Sermon on the Mount draws a parallel with much of the modern church movement asking "is there not a rather pathetic tendency to think in terms of fighting the world, and sin, and the things that are opposed to Christ, by means of great organizations? Am I wrong when I suggest that the controlling and prevailing thought of the Christian Church throughout the world seems to be the very opposite of what is indicated in this text? 'There', they say, 'is the powerful enemy set against us, and here is the divided Christian Church. We must all get together, we must have one huge organization to face that organized enemy. Then we shall make an impact, and then we shall conquer.' But 'Blessed are the meek', not those who trust to their own organizing, not those who trust to their own powers and abilities and their own institutions. Rather it is the very reverse of that. And this is true, not only here, but in the whole message of the Bible. You get it in that perfect story of Gideon where God went on reducing the numbers, not adding to them. That is the spiritual method, and here it is once more emphasized in this amazing statement in the Sermon on the Mount. (Lloyd-Jones, D. M. [Studies in the Sermon on the Mount](#))

Blessed (see **makarios**) means spiritually prosperous, independent of one's circumstances because it is a state bestowed by God and not a feeling felt.

To reiterate, notice that the beatitudes are not random statements but exhibit a logical order --**poverty of spirit**, a recognition and acknowledgement of one's spiritual bankruptcy apart from God (and Jesus) naturally leads to a state of **mourning** over living a life independent of God's good and perfect will, a lifestyle which grieves the heart of the Father but from which flows a genuine **meekness** established in the heart by the comfort the contrite sinner receives. Now as gentle men and gentle women, we meekly (as used in the Bible) bow our knee to the Father and say "What pleases Thee O Father is our heart's desire."

Spurgeon says it is "Not your high-spirited, quick-tempered men, who will put up with no insult, your hectoring, lofty ones, who are ever ready to resent any real or imagined disrespect, there is no blessing here for them; but blessed are the gentle, those who are ready to be thought nothing of. They are lowly-minded, and are ready to give up their portion in the earth; therefore it shall come back to them. They neither boast, nor contend, nor exult over others, yet are they heirs of all the good which God has created on the face of the earth. In their meekness they are like their King, and they shall reign with him. The promised land is for the tribes of the meek: before them the Canaanites shall be driven out. He has the best of this world who thinks least of it, and least of himself.

MacArthur - The blessings of the Beatitudes are for those who are realistic about their sinfulness, who are repentant of their sins, and who are responsive to God in His righteousness. Those who are unblessed, unhappy, and shut out of the kingdom are the proud, the arrogant, the unrepentant-the self-sufficient and self-righteous who see in themselves no unworthiness and feel no need for God's help and God's righteousness. (MacArthur, J: [Matthew 1-7 Macarthur New Testament Commentary Chicago: Moody Press](#))

Gentle (meek, KJV) ([4239](#))(**praus** -- some sources state it originates from **paos** = easy, mild or soft) (**Click** for in depth study of the related noun "**gentleness**" = **prautes** which is a fruit of the Holy Spirit - Gal 5:23-[note](#)) describes those who are of a quiet, gentle spirit, in opposition to the proud and supercilious Scribes and Pharisees and their disciples. We have a compound word **gentleman**, which once fully expressed the meaning of the word meek, but in our modern society has almost wholly lost its original meaning. **Paus** describes a person who is not overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance, but instead one who is gentle, humble, lowly, defers, and is considerate or mild.

Ultimately person who manifests **praus** is the one who imitates Jesus (cf His gentleness in Mt 11:29-[note](#)) enabled of course by the power of His indwelling Spirit.

Mattoon - Hebrew scholar Gensenius, says that the meaning of the Old Testament word for "meekness" involves "a lowly, pious,

and modest mind, which prefers to bear injuries rather than return them." Meekness is not only the opposite of pride, but of stubbornness, fierceness, and vengefulness. It is the opposite of self-will toward God, and of ill-will toward men. **The meek person will not expect to be always treated with respect and reverence.** He will do his duty in the station where God has set him gently and lovingly, seeking not honor from men, ambitious only to be well pleasing unto the Lord. Meekness is also patience in reception of injuries with a belief that God will vindicate us. The heart of the meek is too great to be moved by little insults. It looks upon those who offer insults and are offensive with pity. The person that is constantly ruffled, that suffers every little insult or injury to throw him off his guard, and to raise a storm of passion within, is at the mercy of every mortal that chooses to disturb him. He is like the troubled sea that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. We may acknowledge our own bankruptcy (Mt 5:3) and mourn (Mt 5:4), but to respond with meekness when others tell us of our spiritual bankruptcy and weaknesses is far harder. Our tendency is to fight back or defend ourselves. Jesus, however, did not defend Himself when He was falsely accused, abused, slandered, and mocked. (1 Peter 2:23) **Meekness** is that temper of spirit in which we accept God's dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. It is closely linked with the word humility. It is the gentleness of strength, not mere effeminacy. The Greek word for meek was also used to describe an animal which has been domesticated, which has been trained to obey the word of a command, which has learned to answer to the reins. It is the word for an animal which has learned to accept control, such as the taming of a wild stallion. Thus, the meek man has self control. He has his passions and anger under control. He knows when it is the proper time to be angry at that which is wrong or unjust, and when not to be angry. Ruling your spirit is meekness. It takes great strength to have self-control and self-discipline. (Proverbs 16:32). It was the lack of self control which ruined Alexander the Great, who, in a fit of uncontrolled temper in the middle of a drunken debauch, hurled a spear at his best friend and killed him. No man can lead others until he has mastered himself; no man can serve others until he has subjected himself; no man can be in control of others until he has learned to control himself. The man, however, who gives himself into the complete control of God will gain this meekness which will indeed enable him to inherit the earth. Meekness is hard to learn, but it is a necessary lesson for us, for it was characteristic of the Lord Jesus Christ, and He declared that those who have this trait are truly blessed.

Praus is used 4 times in the NT in the NASB (Matt 5:5; 11:29; 21:5; 1 Pet 3:4) and is always translated "**gentle**" but could be translated as "meek" or "tender." It refers to an inward grace of the soul. Here are some variations in translation...

"who don't trust in their own power"

"whose strength is in their gentleness" ([Barclay](#))

Praus - 14x in the **Septuagint** (LXX) - Num 12:3; Job 24:4; 36:15; Ps 25:9KJV; Ps 34:2; 37:11; 76:9; 147:6; 149:4; Isa 26:6; Da 4:19; Joel 3:11; Zeph 3:12; Zech 9:9

Numbers 12:3ESV Now the man Moses was very **meek** (Lxx = praus), more than all people who were on the face of the earth.

Psalms 37:11ESV But the **meek** (Lxx = praus) shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace.

In Classical Greek **praus** was used to describe tame or gentle animals (an unbroken colt was useless), a soothing medicine (medicine that was too strong would harm rather than cure), a mild or soft word (cf Pr 15:1), a gentle voice (emotion out of control would destroy and tear down) or a gentle breeze (wind out of control would bring destruction).

And so a person **without meekness** is

"like a city that is broken into and without walls" (Pr 25:28).

"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city" (Pr 16:32).

As **Barclay** relates "It was the lack of that very quality which ruined Alexander the Great, who, in a fit of uncontrolled temper in the middle of a drunken debauch, hurled a spear at his best friend and killed him. No man can lead others until he has mastered himself; no man can serve others until he has subjected himself; no man can be in control of others until he has learned to control himself. But the man who gives himself into the complete control of God will gain this meekness which will indeed enable him to inherit the earth. ([Matthew 5 Commentary - Daily Study Bible -online](#))

As someone has said **praus** is a word with a "caress" in it. In this regard it is interesting to note John Wycliffe's translation of Mt 5:5 as "Blessed be mild men."

MacArthur writes that "**Meekness** is the opposite of violence and vengeance. The **meek person**, for example, accepts joyfully the seizing of his property, knowing that he has infinitely better and more permanent possessions awaiting him in heaven (Heb. 10:34). The **meek person** has died to self, and he therefore does not worry about injury to himself, or about loss, insult, or abuse. The **meek person** does not defend himself, first of all because that is His Lord's command and example, and second because he knows that he does not deserve defending. Being poor in spirit and having mourned over his great sinfulness, the gentle person stands humbly

before God, knowing he has nothing to commend himself. (MacArthur, J: [Matthew 1-7 Macarthur New Testament Commentary Chicago: Moody Press](#))

As noted above the Greeks characterized meekness as power under control and in the case of the Spirit filled believer this means that he or she is under the control of God's Spirit. From a practical standpoint, the individual who is "**praus**" exhibits a freedom from malice, bitterness, or any desire for revenge. The only way to truly define meekness is in the **context of relationships** because it refers to **how we treat others**. A **gentle spirit** should characterize our relationship with both man and God.

Meekness/gentleness also implies self-control. Aristotle explained that it is the mean between excessive anger and excessive angerlessness. So the man who is meek is able to balance his anger. It is strength under control. The meek person is strong! He is gentle, meek, and mild, but he is in control. He is as strong as steel.

Meekness implies submission to God but it is not a passive submission that shrugs its shoulders and says, "Oh well, I can't do anything about it anyway," but it is an active submission, a choosing to accept God's ways without murmuring or disputing.

Meekness is not cowardice, emotional flabbiness, lack of conviction, complacency, timidity or the willingness to have peace at any cost.

Neither does **meekness** suggest indecisiveness, wishy-washiness, or a lack of confidence. The meek person is gentle and mild in his own cause, though he may be a lion in God's cause or in defending others.

Meekness is not shyness or a withdrawn personality, as contrasted with that of an extrovert. Nor can **meekness** be reduced to mere niceness. D Martyn Lloyd-Jones explains it this way...

There are people who seem to be born naturally nice. That is not what the Lord means when He says, 'Blessed are the meek.' That is something purely biological, the kind of thing you get in animals. One dog is nicer than another, one cat is nicer than another. That is not meekness. So it does not mean to be naturally nice or easy to get on with. Nor does it mean weakness in personality or character. Still less does it mean a spirit of compromise or 'peace at any price. How often are these things mistaken. How often is the man regarded as meek who says, 'Anything rather than have a disagreement. (Lloyd-Jones, D. M. [Studies in the Sermon on the Mount](#))

Meekness is not weakness, but meekness does not use its power for its own defense or selfish purposes. Meekness is controlled strength or power completely surrendered to God's control. It is an attitude of heart in which all energies are brought into the perfect control of the Holy Spirit.

Mattoon - let's define what MEEKNESS is NOT. Meekness is not weakness, timidity, cowardice, flabbiness, a wishy-washy lack of conviction, being an introvert or being a sissy. On the contrary, the word has the opposite meaning. If you think meekness is weakness, trying being meek for a week. Meekness is not vindictive, does not retaliate, is not selfish, does not emphasize its rights, does not exalt itself, and is not cruel and unkind. It is not being a hen-pecked husband or a brow-beaten wife. It is not a "yes-man" on the job. Meekness is not a passive acceptance of all the sinful acts and evil practices which unsaved men may try to enforce upon us in this world. So what is it?

The courage, strength, conviction, and softness of meekness come from the **Spirit** (see note Galatians 5:23), not from **self**. This spirit of meekness is ultimately the spirit of Christ Himself. Peter records our Lord's example of meekness that we might follow...

21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, **leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps**, 22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously (see **notes 1 Peter 2:21; 22; 23**).

Notice that in meekness Jesus did not attempt to defend Himself nor did He return evil for evil even though accused and suffering unjustly. This is our precious example of meekness beloved. Will you follow the Savior's steps along this narrow path? You will be blessed now and forever.

W E Vine writes that...

Meekness is an in-wrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly towards God.

It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing and resisting

Praus refers to one who is not overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance and is gentle, humble, considerate, meek and unassuming.

Lloyd-Jones explains that...

The meek man is not proud of himself, he does not in any sense glory in himself. He feels that there is nothing in himself of which he can boast. It also means that he does not assert himself... He does not make demands for his position, his privileges, his possessions, his status in life (see esp. Phil 2:5)... the man who is meek is not even sensitive about himself. He is not always watching himself and his own interests. He is not always on the defensive... We spend the whole of our lives watching ourselves. But when a man becomes meek he has finished with all that; he no longer worries about himself and what other people say. To be truly meek means we no longer protect ourselves, because we see there is nothing worth defending. So we are not on the defensive; all that is gone. The man who is truly meek never pities himself, he is never sorry for himself. He never talks to himself and says, 'You are having a hard time, how unkind these people are not to understand you: He never thinks: 'How wonderful I really am, if only other people gave me a chance.' Self-pity! What hours and years we waste in this! But the man who has become meek has finished with all that. To be meek, in other words, means that you have finished with yourself altogether, and you come to see you have no rights or deserts at all. You come to realize that nobody can harm you. John Bunyan puts it perfectly. 'He that is down need fear no fall.' When a man truly sees himself, he knows nobody can say anything about him that is too bad. You need not worry about what men may say or do; you know you deserve it all and more... A person who is of the type that I have been describing must of necessity be mild. Think again of the examples; think again of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mild, gentle, lowly— those are the terms... But it also means that there will be a complete absence of the spirit of retaliation, having our own back or seeing that the other person pays for it. It also means, therefore, that we shall be patient and long-suffering, especially when we suffer unjustly... But it also means that we are ready to listen and to learn; that we have such a poor idea of ourselves and our own capabilities that we are ready to listen to others. Above all we must be ready to be taught by the Spirit, and led by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Meekness always implies a teachable spirit. It is what we see again in the case of our Lord Himself. Though he was the Second Person in the blessed Holy Trinity, He became man, He deliberately humbled Himself to the extent that He was dependent entirely upon what God gave Him, what God taught Him and what God told Him to do. He humbled Himself to that, and that is what is meant by being meek. We must be ready to learn and listen and especially must we surrender ourselves to the Spirit... Finally, I would put it like this. We are to leave everything — ourselves, our rights, our cause, our whole future — in the hands of God, and especially so if we feel we are suffering unjustly. (Lloyd-Jones, D. M. [Studies in the Sermon on the Mount](#))

Meekness speaks of a submissive and trusting attitude toward God. It is an attitude which accepts all of God's ways with us as good. It does not murmur or dispute (cf Phil 2:3, 14-16, James 5:9, Pr 13:10 15:18). It neither rebels nor retaliates (cf Pr 20:22, Ro 12:17-21, Mt 5:39, 44, 1Thes 5:15, 1Cor 13:5, 1Pet 3:8-9). It realizes that what comes to us from the hand of man has been permitted by God's sovereignty (Da 4:34-35, Ps 103:19 Da 7:27, 1Ti 6:15), has been filtered by His fingers of love, and will be used by God for His glory and our ultimate good. God is sovereign and in absolute control. Meekness looks beyond circumstances — no matter how upsetting and hurtful — and bows the knee to the sovereign God realizing that everything is permitted and used by Him for our chastening, our purifying.

Meekness says, "Not my will, but Yours be done."

Meekness bows before the throne and realizes that the God Who sits upon that throne is an all-wise God. God makes His wise plans on the basis of His righteous character. He has righteous ends in mind and chooses righteous means to achieve those ends.

Meekness knows that the God Who sits upon the throne of the universe is a good God. Meekness then, when faced with adversity, bows the knee. Why? How? Because the meek individual has come to know God's character. (Ponder a few of these passages - Isaiah 14:24, 27, Psalm 52:9, Psalm 107:9, Isaiah 45:5-7, Ecclesiastes 7:13-14, Psalm 31:14-15).

Meekness looks "not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18). meekness does not accuse God of being unrighteous or unjust.

Meekness realizes that God is holy. He is a morally excellent, perfect being, pure in every aspect. **Someekness** makes itself low before His might and majesty.

Meekness whispers through its tears, "God, I trust You. I know You are holy. I know You are righteous. I know You are just. I accept everything that comes into my life without murmuring, without disputing, without retaliation. I know, God, that You are a God of wrath. I know that within You is a holy hatred for all that is unrighteous — an unquenchable desire to punish all unrighteousness. I know, God, that whatever is inconsistent with You must ultimately be consumed. And I wait for that day when You, in righteousness and justice, will move with wrath."

Meekness manifests itself in its reaction to evil — by turning the other cheek, loving its enemies, and praying for those who persecute it (Mt 5:39, 44).

Meekness can do this because it realizes that the insults and injuries which evil men and women may inflict are permitted by a

sovereign God Who is in complete control and Who is therefore able to use such events to purify and build godly character in the one who is insulted or injured. As you can see meekness is absolutely not a characteristic of man in his natural (fallen, sinful, unredeemed, unregenerate) state but reflects an inwrought grace of God's Spirit living in and through him!. (Adapted from Kay Arthur's highly recommended book [Lord, Only You Can Change Me: A Devotional Study on Growing in Character from the Beatitudes](#) which covers Mt 5:1-16, see also her excellent complementary study on -[Lord, I'm Torn Between Two Masters: A Devotional Study on Genuine Faith from the Sermon on the Mount](#))

Praus describes the man or woman whose temper is always under complete control. It means power put under control. The meek person knows when to be angry and when not to be angry. They patiently bear wrongs to themselves but are ever chivalrously ready to spring to the help of others who are wronged. When the **meek** person becomes angry, he or she is aroused by that which maligns God's Name or His work or is harmful to others, not by what is done against himself or herself. There is in fact a lack of anger when they are harmed or criticized. And when they do demonstrate a "righteous anger" (cf Eph 4:26), it is controlled and carefully directed, not a careless and wild venting of emotion that spatters everyone who is near. People who are angered at every nuisance or inconvenience to themselves know nothing of meekness or gentleness or meekness.

Praus and **prautes** convey the idea of tenderness and graciousness, and can be accurately translated "meekness" and "meek" respectively. But unlike those English words, the Greek terms **do not connote weakness** but rather power under control. The adjective **praus** was often used of a wild horse that was broken and made useful to its owner. For believers, to be gentle is to be willingly under the sovereign control of God. Numbers 12:3 describes Moses as

"very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth."

Yet that same Moses could act decisively, and flared up in anger when provoked.

How would you describe your attitude, beloved? Are you meek, humble, gentle, and mild, or do you tend to display an arrogant, selfish attitude toward others?

Gentleness is a God-honored character trait, a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:23) and is never bitter, malicious, self-seeking, self-promoting, arrogant, or vengeful.

Adam Clarke writes that the English word "**meek**"

comes from the old Anglo-Saxon meca, or meccea, a companion or equal, because he who is of a meek or gentle spirit, is ever ready to associate with the meanest of those who fear God, feeling himself superior to none; and well knowing that he has nothing of spiritual or temporal good but what he has received from the mere bounty of God, having never deserved any favour from his hand. (Clarke, A. Clarke's Commentary: Matthew).

The person who is "**gentle**" or "**meek**" sees everything as coming from God and accepting it without murmuring and without disputing.

The "gentle, meek" person (empowered by the indwelling Spirit, gentleness being His fruit) is enabled to say

"God, in this situation (whatever it might be), You are in control. You are sovereign and You rule over all. You have a purpose and that one aspect of Your purpose is to make me more like Christ."

Robert Johnstone (in his excellent nineteenth-century commentary on James) has some insightful comments on **meek** or **gentle** writing...

"I do not know that at any point the opposition between the spirit of the world and the Spirit of Christ is more marked, more obviously diametrical, than with regard to this feature of character. That "the meek" should "inherit the earth"—they who bear wrongs, and exemplify that love which "seeketh not her own,"—to a world which believes in high-handedness and self-assertion, and pushing the weakest to the wall, a statement like this of the Lord from heaven cannot but appear an utter paradox. The man of the world desires to be counted anything but "meek" or "poor in spirit," and would deem such a description of him equivalent to a charge of unmanliness. Ah, brethren, this is because we have taken in Satan's conception of manliness instead of God's. One Man has been shown us by God, in whom His ideal of man was embodied; and He, "when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously"; He for those who nailed Him to the tree prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." The world's spirit of wrath, then, must be folly; whilst than a spirit of **meekness** like His, in the midst of controversy, oppositions, trials of whatever kind, there can be no surer evidence that "Jesus is made of God to His people wisdom." ([Johnstone, Robert : A Commentary on James - online](#))

Strong's note on **praus** states that

"Meekness toward God is that disposition of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without

disputing or resisting. In the OT, the meek are those wholly relying on God rather than their own strength to defend them against injustice. Thus, meekness toward evil people means knowing God is permitting the injuries they inflict, that He is using them to purify His elect, and that He will deliver His elect in His time." (cf Is41:17)

William Barclay (critique) has a lengthy discussion of **praus** (and the related word **prautes**) writing that praus has two main lines of meanings...

"(a) Aristotle, the great Greek thinker and teacher, has much to say about *praotēs* (related to **praus**). It was his custom to define every virtue as the mean between two extremes. On one side there was excess of some quality, on the other defect; and in between there was exactly its right proportion.

Aristotle defines **praotēs** (related to **praus**) as the mean between being too angry and never being angry at all.

The man who is praus is the man who is always angry at the right time and never angry at the wrong time. [Matthew 5 Commentary - Daily Study Bible -online](#)

Thus a **meek** individual is one who is angry on the right occasion with the right people at the right moment for the right length of time. Stated another way, **meekness** is "anger under control" but not just any kind of anger. Meekness is always the mean between excessive anger and excessive angerlessness. The man who is meek is able to balance his anger. Since a **meek** man is not a self-centered man, the anger is not about that which happens to him but is rather a righteous anger at what is wrongly done to others. (See the examples of Moses and Jesus in this discussion)

Barclay goes on to add...

To put that in another way, the man who is **praus** is the man who is kindled by indignation at the wrongs and the sufferings of others, but is never moved to anger by the wrongs and the insults he himself has to bear. So, then, the man who is (as in the Authorized Version), meek is the man who is always angry at the right time but never angry at the wrong time.

(b) There is another fact which will illumine the meaning of this word. **Praus** is the Greek for an animal which has been trained and domesticated until it is completely under control. Therefore the man who is **praus** is the man who has every instinct and every passion under perfect control. It would not be right to say that such a man is entirely self-controlled, for such self-control is beyond human power; but it would be right to say that such a man is God-controlled. (cf Gal 5:23, 2Peter 1:6)" ([Matthew 5 Commentary - Daily Study Bible -online](#))

To reiterate Barclay's point, it is notable that the Greek term for **meekness** has its roots in the domestication of animals. Think of talk about a horse that has been "broken," meaning that the animal has learned to accept **control** by its master and is properly behaved. From there, the term has been extended to include people who are properly behaved. The **meek** are those of gentle behavior, loving and submissive.

Meekness is the attitude expressed by John Bunyan in **The Pilgrim's Progress** writing...

*He that is down needs fear no fall,
He that is low no pride;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide.*

Marvin Vincent has a long note on **praus, meekness**, writing that it is

Another word which, though never used in a bad sense, Christianity has lifted to a higher plane, and made the symbol of a higher good. Its primary meaning is mild, gentle. It was applied to inanimate things, as light, wind, sound, sickness. It was used of a horse; gentle.

As a human attribute, Aristotle defines it as the mean between stubborn anger and that negativeness of character which is incapable of even righteous indignation: according to which it is tantamount to equanimity. Plato opposes it to fierceness or cruelty, and uses it of humanity to the condemned; but also of the conciliatory demeanor of a demagogue seeking popularity and power. Pindar applies it to a king, mild or kind to the citizens, and Herodotus uses it as opposed to anger.

These pre-Christian meanings of the word exhibit two general characteristics.

1. They express **outward conduct** merely. 2. They contemplate relations to men only. The Christian word, on the contrary, describes an **inward quality**, and that as related primarily to God.

The equanimity, mildness, kindness, represented by the classical word, are founded in self-control or in natural disposition. The

Christian meekness is based on humility, which is not a natural quality but an outgrowth of a renewed nature.

To the pagan the word often implied **condescension**, to the Christian it implies **submission**.

The Christian quality in its manifestation, reveals all that was best in the heathen virtue — mildness, gentleness, equanimity — but these manifestations toward men are emphasized as outgrowths of a spiritual relation to God.

The mildness or kindness of Plato or Pindar imply no sense of inferiority in those who exhibit them; sometimes the contrary. Plato's demagogue is kindly from self-interest and as a means to tyranny. Pindar's king is condescendingly kind.

The meekness of the Christian springs from a sense of the inferiority of the creature to the Creator (cf Mt 5:3), and especially of the sinful creature to the holy God (Mt 5:4). While, therefore, the pagan quality is redolent of self-assertion, the Christian quality carries the flavor of self-abasement.

As toward God, therefore, meekness accepts his dealings without murmur or resistance as absolutely good and wise.

As toward man, it accepts opposition, insult, and provocation, as God's permitted ministers of a chastening demanded by the infirmity and corruption of sin; while, under this sense of his own sinfulness, the meek bears patiently "the contradiction of sinners against himself," forgiving and restoring the erring in a spirit of meekness, considering himself, lest he also be tempted (see Gal 6:1–5). The ideas of forgiveness and restoration nowhere attach to the classical word. They belong exclusively to Christian meekness, which thus shows itself allied to love. (Vincent, M. R. Word studies in the New Testament Vol. 1, Page 3-37)

Praus conveys the idea of "controlled strength" and is that humble and gentle attitude that expresses itself in a patient submissiveness.

Think about it... if gentleness or meekness governs the circumstances we encounter rather than the circumstances governing us, it has to be powerful.

Meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest. The meek have a special happiness because they are free of pride and ambition.

The **gentle or meek** are those who accept all as coming from God and demonstrate that same behavior to others in a gentleness of life, which is the fruit of the Spirit.

Meekness is an equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down because it is not occupied with self at all.

There is no discord possible on the bassviol to a string that does not exist, or that has not been brought to any tension. (H. W. Beecher.)

J C Ryle says that the meek are...

He means those who are of a patient and contented spirit. They are willing to put up with little honor here below; they can bear injuries without resentment; they are not ready to take offense. Like Lazarus in the parable, they are content to wait for their good things (Luke 16:20). Blessed are all such! They are never losers in the long run. One day they will "reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10). (Ryle, J. C. Matthew.)

J Vernon McGee asks...

How do you become meek? Our Lord was meek and lowly, and He will inherit all things; we are the heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. We are told that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, and meekness. Only the Spirit of God can break you and make you meek. If you could produce meekness by your own effort, you would be proud of yourself, wouldn't you? And out goes your meekness! Meekness is not produced by self-effort but by Spirit effort. Only the Holy Spirit can produce meekness in the heart of a yielded Christian... The Beatitudes present goals which the child of God wants to realize in his own life, but he can't do it on his own. You may have heard of the preacher who had a message entitled "Meekness and How I Attained It." He said that he hadn't delivered his message yet, but as soon as he got an audience big enough, he was going to give it! Well, I have a notion that he had long since lost his meekness. Meekness can only be a fruit of the Holy Spirit. ([McGee, J. V. Thru the Bible commentary. Vol. 4, Page 30. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#)) (Bolding added)

D Martyn Lloyd-Jones makes an interesting observation regarding how **meekness** is contrasted with the first two beatitudes noting that...

here (meekness) we are reaching a point at which we begin to be concerned about other people. Let me put it like this. I can see my own utter nothingness and helplessness face-to-face with the demands of the gospel and the law of God (the first beatitude, "poor in spirit"). I am aware, when I am honest with myself, of the sin and the evil that are within me, and that drag me down (the

second beatitude, "those who mourn"). And I am ready to face both these things.

But how much more difficult it is to allow other people to say things like that about me! I instinctively resent it. We all of us prefer to condemn ourselves than to allow somebody else to condemn us. I say of myself that I am a sinner, but instinctively I do not like anybody else to say I am a sinner. That is the principle that is introduced at this point. So far, I myself have been looking at myself. Now, other people are looking at me, and I am in a relationship to them, and they are doing certain things to me. How do I react to that? That is the matter which is dealt with at this point. I think you will agree that this is more humbling and more humiliating than everything that has gone before. (Meekness) is to allow other people to put the searchlight upon me instead of my doing it myself. (Lloyd-Jones, D. M. [Studies in the Sermon on the Mount](#))

The perfect example of **praus** is our Lord Jesus Christ and how He walked and responded even to those who mistreated and falsely accused Him (1Peter 2:18-25). He did not operate with deceit, did not return derogatory remarks and did not threaten even though He had more right to do so as Creator than anyone ever created. He kept His mouth closed & prayed. He continually entrusted Himself to God, knowing that God knew his unjust treatment & that He would judge righteously. Jesus' purpose was not to judge (at least not as a Man) but to win over the sinner. Jesus then is the wife's (and all believer's) Example, Role model and most importantly our Enabler (through the Spirit of Christ Who indwells all believers) to supernaturally exhibit this gentle spirit. (1Th 5:24).

Meekness caused Joseph to look beyond the murderous intentions and cruel actions of his brothers to the sovereignty of God. And he was ready to accept all of God's dealings with him without bitterness. As the brothers justifiably feared for their lives, in meekness, the Joseph exhibits the perfect example of power under control declaring...

"Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? And as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive." (Genesis 50:19-20)

In the New Testament **Jesus** is our example of perfect gentleness or meekness, in His famous invitation...

28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you **rest** (refresh you, cause you to cease from movement or labor in order to recover your strength, which emphasizes the restorative character of the rest) 29 "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am **gentle** (meek - **praus**) and humble in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND **REST** (noun form of "rest" in v28) FOR YOUR SOULS. 30 "For My yoke is easy (profitable, good for any use, easy to bear chrestos see related word chrestotes), and My load is light." (Mt 11:28-30)

A yoke was a wooden frame which was put on the backs of animals and around their necks joining the two animals for a common task, such as plowing or pulling a load. If you were yoked with Jesus Christ, who do you think would "pull the load"? Obviously the Lord. And so in order to manifest meekness we must yoke ourselves to Jesus, for He is the very essence and epitome of meekness. He promises us that if we take His we will find the rest of available in a meek, humble heart. The picture would have been very familiar to Jesus' audience for in Biblical times a young ox was commonly yoked to an older, more experienced ox so that the older ox might train the younger to perform properly. For example, by bearing the same yoke, the untrained ox would soon learn the proper pace and how to heed the direction of the master. By analogy believers learn by being yoked to Christ, as we surrender to His will in every area of your life.

His yoke is "easy" in that it is good and profitable and has nothing harsh or galling about it. Christ's yoke is not one which chafes, irks or galls, but is smooth and even. Hence, the term suggests that gracious nature which mellows that which otherwise would have been harsh and austere. Christ yoke is "easy" in that it is well-fitting. In Palestine ox yokes were made of wood. The ox was brought, and the measurements were taken. The yoke was then roughed out, and the ox was brought back to have the yoke tried on. The yoke was carefully adjusted, so that it would fit well, and not gall the neck of the patient beast. The yoke was tailor-made to fit the ox. And so is His yoke for you beloved, for He is "gentle and humble in heart". Learn **meekness** from the Master's touch.

Christ shows as alluded to earlier that meekness is by no means a reflection of weakness or a spineless character. In fact, as stated, genuine Spirit given meekness is anger under control. Anger that is properly motivated and apportioned. In short, it is a "righteous anger". It follows that meekness is not apathy, not a milquetoast mentality, nor a doormat demeanor! Let's look at how our gentle Lord manifested his "meekness" in appropriate anger...

And the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers seated. 15 And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the moneychangers, and overturned their tables; 16 and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a house of merchandise." 17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "ZEAL FOR THY HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME." (John 2:17-18)

The meekness of Christ could not ignore the moneychangers and sacrifice sellers. Instead we see His meekness manifest at the

right time against the right people and for the right reason.

In fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy ([Zech 9:9](#)), as Jesus prepares for His triumphal entry in His last week in Jerusalem, Matthew records

"BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, **GENTLE** (praus), AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.'" ([Mt 21:5](#))

Kent Hughes sums up Jesus as the incarnation of **meekness** noting that

He, he displayed it in two ways, both of which showed his power. In respect to his own person, **he practiced neither retaliation nor vindictiveness**. When he was mocked and spat upon, he answered nothing, for he trusted his Father. As we have noted, when he was confronted by Pilate, he kept silent. When his friends betrayed him and fled, he uttered no reproach. When Peter denied him, Jesus restored him to fellowship and service. When Judas came and kissed him in Gethsemane, Jesus called him "friend." And Jesus meant it. He was never insincere. Even in the throes of death, he pleaded, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). In all of this Jesus, meek and mild, was in control. He radiated power.

Yet, **when it came to matters of faith and the welfare of others, Jesus was a lion**. He rebuked the Pharisees' hardness of heart when he healed the man's withered hand on the Sabbath (Mt 12:9-45). He was angered when his disciples tried to prevent little children from coming to him (Mark 10:13-16). Jesus made a whip and drove the moneychangers from the temple (John 2:14-17). He called Peter "Satan" after the outspoken fisherman tried to deter him from His heavenly mission (Mt 16:21-23). All of this came from Jesus, the incarnation of gentleness.

Bringing this all together, we have an amazing picture. The one who is meek has a gentle spirit because he trusts God. Indeed, there is a caress about his presence. At the same time the meek person possesses immense strength and self-control, which he exhibits in extending love rather than retaliation against those who do him evil. He stands up fearlessly in defense of others or of the truth as the occasion arises. (Hughes, R. K. [Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom. Crossway Books](#)) (Bolding added)

Hughes goes on to note some practical benchmarks by which you can assess whether you are manifesting the meekness Christ's calls for...

- **Harshness**: If you are mean in your treatment of others, if there is an absence of gentleness in your treatment of others, take heed.
- **Grasping**: If you make sure you always get yours first, if numero uno is the subtle driving force in your life, if you care little about how your actions affect others, beware.
- **Vengeful**: If you are known as someone never to cross, if you always get your "pound of flesh," be on your guard.
- **Uncontrolled**: If rage fills your soul so that life is a series of explosions occasioned by the "fools" in your life, watch out.

Again, this is not to suggest that you are not a Christian if you fall into these sins, but rather to point out that if they are part of your persona, **if you are a self-satisfied "Christian" who thinks that the lack of gentleness and meekness is "just you" and people will have to get used to it, if you are not repentant, you are probably not a Christian**. (Hughes, R. K. [Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom. Crossway Books](#)) (Bolding added)

Matthew Henry has an excellent summary of meekness writing...

The meek are those who quietly submit themselves to God, to His word and to His rod, who follow His directions, and comply with His designs, and are gentle towards all men (see note Titus 3:2); who can bear provocation without being inflamed by it; are either silent, or return a soft answer; and who can show their displeasure when there is occasion for it, without being transported into any indecencies; who can be cool when others are hot; and in their patience keep possession of their own souls, when they can scarcely keep possession of any thing else.

They are **the meek**, who are rarely and hardly provoked, but quickly and easily pacified; and who would rather forgive twenty injuries than revenge one, having the rule of their own spirits. (Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible)

Barton explains that...

Meek people realize their position before God (Mt 5:3) and gladly live it out before their fellow humans. They do not look down on themselves, but they do not think too highly of themselves either. Such people exemplify the Golden Rule. They are not arrogant; they are the opposite of those who seek to gain as much for themselves as possible. Ironically, then, it will not be the arrogant, wealthy, harsh people who get everything. Instead, the meek will inherit the earth. ([Barton, B. B. Matthew. Life application Bible commentary. Page 77. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers](#))

Martyn Lloyd-Jones explains how one can know when he or she is truly **meek**. Here is his test...

"The man who is truly meek is the man who is amazed that God and man can think of him as well as they do and treat him as well as they do." (Lloyd-Jones, D. M. [Studies in the Sermon on the Mount](#))

As **Hughes** notes this

"test as to whether we are truly meek is not whether we can say we are poor sinners, but rather what we do when someone else calls us vile sinners. Try it! (Hughes, R. K. [Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom. Crossway Books](#))

Why is **meekness** so important? Why not just be Christians who have good manners and a good standing in the community? Our Lord is not calling us to business as usual but to be radical believers who emulate His character, character that shows the reality of His life in and through our lives, especially as seen in this paradoxical trait of non-retaliatory power under control. The world is dead in its trespasses and sins and desperately needs to see the meek, gentle spirit of Christ in and through you dear follower of Christ. Will you surrender to His call?

Thomas Watson...

The proposition I shall insist on, is that meek people are blessed people. For the right understanding of this, we must know there is a twofold meekness. Meekness towards God, meekness towards man.

1. Meekness towards GOD, which implies two things: submission to his will; flexibleness to his Word.

[1] Submission to God's WILL: when we react calmly, without swelling or murmuring, under the adverse dispensations of providence. 'It is the Lord's will. Let him do what he thinks best' (1 Samuel 3:18). The meek-spirited Christian says thus: 'Let God do what he will with me, let him carve out whatever condition he pleases, I will submit.' God sees what is best for me, whether a fertile soil or a barren. Let him chequer his work as he please, it suffices that God has done it. It was an unmeek spirit in the prophet to struggle with God: 'I do well to be angry to the death!' (Jonah 4:9).

[2] Flexibleness to God's WORD: when we are willing to let the Word bear sway in our souls and become pliable to all its laws and maxims. He is spiritually meek who conforms himself to the mind of God, and does not quarrel with the instructions of the Word—but with the corruptions of his heart. Cornelius' speech to Peter savored of a meek spirit: 'Now here we are, waiting before God to hear the message the Lord has given you' (Acts 10:33). How happy is it when the Word which comes with majesty, is received with meekness! (James 1:21).

2. Meekness towards MAN. Basil calls this 'the indelible character of a gracious soul.' 'Blessed are the meek'. To illustrate this, I shall show what this meekness is. Meekness is a grace whereby we are enabled by the Spirit of God to moderate our angry passions. It is a grace. The philosopher calls it a virtue—but the apostle calls it a grace, and therefore reckons it among the 'fruit of the Spirit' (Galatians 5:23). It is of a divine extract and original. By it we are enabled to moderate our passion. By nature the heart is like a troubled sea, casting forth the foam of anger and wrath. Now meekness calms the passions. It sits as moderator in the soul, quieting and giving check to its distempered motions. As the moon serves to temper and allay the heat of the sun, so Christian meekness allays the heat of passion. Meekness of spirit not only fits us for communion with God—but for civil converse with men; and thus among all the graces it holds first place. Meekness has a divine beauty and sweetness in it. It brings credit to true religion; it wins upon all. This meekness consists in three things: the bearing of injuries, the forgiving of injuries, the recompensing good for evil. (See full message [Beatitudes](#))

- Ps 25:13; 37:9,11,22,29,34; Isaiah 60:21; Romans 4:13
- [Matthew 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Matthew 5:5: Happy are the Meek - Study Guide](#) - John MacArthur
- [Matthew 5:5: Happy are the Meek](#) - John MacArthur
- [Matthew 5:5: The Only Way to Happiness: Be Meek](#) - John MacArthur

Spurgeon comments that...

The quiet-spirited, the gentle, the self-sacrificing, -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.

David asks...

Who is the man who fears the LORD? He will instruct him in the way he should choose. His soul will abide in prosperity, and his descendants will inherit the land. (Psalm 25:12,13)

Spurgeon on His seed shall inherit the earth.

God remembers Isaac for the sake of Abraham, and Jacob for the sake of Isaac. Good men's sons have a goodly portion to begin the world with, but many of them, alas! turn a father's blessing into a curse. The promise is not broken because in some instances men wilfully refuse to receive it; moreover, it is in its spiritual meaning that it now holds good; our spiritual seed do inherit all that was meant by "the earth," or Canaan; they receive the blessing of the new covenant. May the Lord make us the joyful parents of many spiritual children, and we shall have no fears about their maintenance, for the Lord will make each one of them princes in all the earth.

Sermon by Spurgeon on Inheritance - [Psalm 47:4 A Wise Desire](#)

They (845) (autos) is emphatic placed first in the Greek construction which means "they" and "they only" will inherit the earth. Only the meek. None other! A present and a future inheritance as explained below.

Loving Jesus, gentle Lamb,
In Thy gracious hands I am;
Make me, Savior, what Thou art,
Live Thyself within my heart.

Inherit (2816) (**kleronomeo** from **kleros** [word study] = First a pebble, piece of wood used in casting lots as in Acts 1:26 then the allotted portion or inheritance, and so a lot, heritage, inheritance + **nemomai** = to possess; see word study - **Kleronomos**) means to receive a share of an inheritance, inherit a portion of property or receive a possession as gift from someone who has died.

Kleronomeo - 18x in 17v - Matt 5:5; 19:29; 25:34; Mark 10:17; Luke 10:25; 18:18; 1 Cor 6:9f; 15:50; Gal 4:30; 5:21; Heb 1:4, 14; 6:12; 12:17; 1 Pet 3:9; Rev 21:7

Kleronomeo - 133x in the non-apocryphal **Septuagint (LXX)** -

Gen 15:3f, 7f; 21:10; 22:17; 24:60; 28:4; 47:27; Exod 23:30; Lev 20:24; Num 14:24, 31; 18:20, 23f; 21:35; 26:53, 55; 27:11; 32:19; 33:54; 34:17; 35:8; Deut 1:8, 21, 39; 2:9, 24, 31; 3:12; 4:1, 5, 14, 22, 26, 38, 47; 5:33; 6:1, 18; 7:1; 8:1; 9:1, 4ff, 23; 10:11; 11:8, 10f, 23, 29, 31; 12:2, 29; 16:20; 17:14; 20:16; 21:1; 23:20; 28:21, 63; 30:5, 16, 18; 31:13; 32:47; 33:23; Josh 1:15; 12:7; 14:2; 16:4; 17:6, 14; 18:2f; 19:9; 22:9; 24:4; Judg 1:18ff; 3:13; 11:2, 21, 23f; 18:9; 1 Kgs 21:15f, 18f; 2 Kgs 17:24; 1 Chr 28:8; Ezra 9:11; Neh 9:15, 22f, 25; Ps 5:1; 25:13; 37:9, 11, 22, 29; 44:3; 69:35; 83:12; 105:44; 119:111; Prov 3:35; 11:29; 13:22; Isa 14:21; 17:14; 34:17; 49:8; 53:12; 54:3; 57:13; 58:11; 60:21; 61:7; 63:18; 65:9; Ezek 35:10; 36:12; Hos 9:6; Obad 1:20; Zeph 2:9; Zech 9:4

David writes...

But the humble will inherit the land, and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity. (Ps 37:11)

Psalm 37, which encourages God's people (in context the Jews, but in application all who have been grafted into the rich root of the olive tree, cf Ro 11:17-24, 8:17) not to fret because of evil, but rather to trust because of this sure promise.

For those blessed by Him will inherit the land; but those cursed by Him will be cut off. (Ps 37:22) (Summarizes

the entire Psalm)

Hughes has an interesting explanation of the believer's inheritance of the earth even in this life writing that...

there is also a present inheritance that abundantly enriches our earthly existence. There is a sense in which those who set their minds on riches never possess anything. This was given classic expression by one of the world's wealthiest men when asked how much is enough money. "Just a little bit more," he answered. **He owned everything, yet possessed nothing!** (Ed note: possessions usually do that to the natural, unregenerate man - they possess him!)

It is the meek who own the earth now, for when their life is free from the tyranny of "just a little more," when a gentle spirit caresses their approach to their rights, then they possess all. As Izaak Walton explained:

I could there sit quietly, and looking on the waters see fishes leaping at flies of several shapes and colors. Looking on the hills, I could behold them spotted with woods and groves. Looking down the meadows, I could see a boy gathering lilies and lady-smocks, and there a girl cropping columbines and cowslips, all to make garlands suitable to this present month of May. As I thus sat, joying in mine own happy condition, I did thankfully remember what my Saviour said, that the meek possess the earth.

The meek are the only ones who inherit the earth. The **"they"** in "they shall inherit" is emphatic: "They alone, only they, shall inherit the earth." They are rich right now; and fifty billion trillion years into eternity they will be lavishing in the unfolding of "the incomparable riches of his grace" (Ephesians 2:7). (Hughes, R. K. [Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom. Crossway Books](#))

D Martyn Lloyd-Jones writes that...

The meek already inherit the earth in this life, in this way. A man who is truly meek is a man who is always satisfied (cf meaning of makarios, blessed, as fully satisfied independent of one's circumstances), he is a man who is already content. Goldsmith expresses it well when he says: 'Having nothing yet hath all.' (Lloyd-Jones, D. M. [Studies in the Sermon on the Mount](#))

George MacDonald puts it like this...

We cannot see the world as God means it in the future, save as our souls are characterized by meekness. In meekness we are its only inheritors. Meekness alone makes the spiritual retina pure to receive God's things as they are, mingling with them neither imperfection nor impurity.

Matthew Henry comments it is...

Not that they (the meek) shall always have much of the (present) earth, much less that they shall be put off with that only; but this branch of godliness has, in a special manner, the promise of life that now is. **Meekness**, however ridiculed and run down, has a real tendency to promote our health, wealth, comfort, and safety, even in this world. The meek and quiet are observed to live the most easy lives, compared with the froward and turbulent. (Ibid)

As **Spurgeon** reminds us...

Some say that the best way to get through the world is to swagger along with a coarse impudence, and to push out of your way all who may be in it; but there is no truth in that idea. The truth lies in quite another direction: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

C H Spurgeon also writes the following on **meekness** first asking...

But who are the meek? Not those who grieve at nothing, because they know nothing; who are not discomposed at the evils that occur, because they discern not evil from good. Not those who are sheltered from the shocks of life by a stupid insensibility, who have either by nature or art the virtue of stocks and stones and resent nothing, because they feel nothing. Brute philosophers are wholly unconcerned in this matter. Apathy is as far from meekness as from humanity. So that one would not easily conceive how any Christians of the purer ages, especially any of the fathers of the church, could confound these and mistake one of the foulest errors of heathenism for a branch of true Christianity.

Nor does Christian meekness imply the being without zeal for God any more than it does ignorance or insensibility. No; it keeps clear of every extreme, whether in excess or defect. It does not destroy but balance the affections which the God of nature never designed should be rooted out by grace, but only brought and

keep under due regulations. It poises the mind aright. It holds an even scale without regard to anger, and sorrow, and fear; reserving the mean in every circumstance of life, and not declining either to the right hand or the left.

Meekness therefore seems properly to relate to ourselves, but it may be referred either to God or our neighbor. When this due composure of mind has reference to God, it is usually termed resignation, a calm acquiescence in whatsoever is his will concerning us, even though it may not be pleasing to nature; saying continually, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." When we consider it more strictly with regard to ourselves, we style it patience or contentedness. When it is exerted toward other men, then it is mildness to the good and gentleness to the evil.

They who are truly meek can clearly discern what is evil, and they can also suffer it. They are sensible of everything of this kind, but still meekness holds the reins. They are exceeding "zealous for the Lord of Hosts," but their zeal is always guided by knowledge, and tempered in every thought, word, and work with the love of man as well as the love of God. They do not desire to extinguish any of the passions which God has for wise ends implanted in their nature, but they have the mastery of all; they hold them all in subjection and employ them only in subservience to those ends. And thus even the harsher and more displeasing passions are applicable to the noblest purposes; even hatred, anger, and fear, when engaged against sin and regulated by faith and love, are as walls and bulwarks to the soul so that the wicked one cannot approach to hurt it.

It is evident this divine temper is not only to abide but to increase in us day by day. Occasions of exercising, and thereby increasing it, will never be wanting while we remain upon earth. "We have need of patience, that after we have done [and suffered] the will of God, we may receive the promise." We have need of resignation, that we may in all circumstances say, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." And we have need of "gentleness toward all men"; but especially toward the evil and unthankful. Otherwise, we shall be overcome of evil instead of overcoming evil with good.

On Anger

Nor does meekness restrain only the outward act, as the scribes and Pharisees taught of old, and the miserable teachers who are not taught of God will not fail to do in all ages. Our Lord guards against this and shows the true extent of it in the following words: "Ye have heard, that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment," verse 21; "But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

Our Lord here ranks under the head of murder even that anger which goes no farther than the heart, which does not show itself by any outward unkindness, no, not so much as a passionate word. "Whosoever is angry with his brother," with any man living, seeing we are all brethren; whosoever feels any unkindness in his heart, any temper contrary to love; whosoever is angry without a cause, without a sufficient cause, or farther than that cause requires, "shall be in danger of the judgment"; *shall*, in that moment, *be obnoxious* to the righteous judgment of God.

But would not one be inclined to prefer the reading of *without a cause*? Is it not entirely superfluous? For if *anger at persons* be a temper contrary to love, how can there be a cause, a sufficient cause for it, any that will justify it in the sight of God?

Anger at sin we allow. In this sense, we may be angry and yet we sin not. In this sense our Lord himself is once recorded to have been angry. "He looked round about upon them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." He was grieved at the sinners and angry at the sin. And this is undoubtedly right before God.

"And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca," whosoever shall give way to anger, so as to utter any contemptuous word. It is observed by commentators, that "raca" is a Syriac word, which properly signifies, *empty, vain, foolish*; so that it is as inoffensive an expression as can well be used toward one at whom we are displeased. And yet, whosoever shall use this, as our Lord assures us, "shall be in danger of the council"; rather, shall be obnoxious thereto: he shall be liable to a severer sentence from the Judge of all the earth.

"But whosoever shall say, Thou fool," whosoever shall so give place to the devil, as to break out into reviling, into designedly reproachful and contumelious language, "shall be obnoxious to hell fire": shall, in that instant, be liable to the highest condemnation. It should be observed that our Lord describes all these as obnoxious to

capital punishment. The first to strangling, usually inflicted on those who were condemned in one of the inferior courts; the second to stoning, which was frequently inflicted on those who were condemned by the great council at Jerusalem; the third to burning alive, inflicted only on the highest offenders in the "valley of the sons of Hinnom."

And whereas men naturally imagine that God will excuse their defect in some duties for their exactness in others, our Lord next takes care to cut off that vain though common imagination. He shows that it is impossible for any sinner to *commute* with God, who will not accept one duty for another nor take a part of obedience for the whole. He warns us that the performing our duty to God will not excuse us from our duty to our neighbor; that works of piety, as they are called, will be so far from commending us to God, if we are wanting in charity, that, on the contrary, that want of charity will make all those works an abomination to the Lord.

"Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee,"—on account of thy unkind behavior toward him, of thy calling him, Raca, or Thou fool; think not that thy gift will atone for thy anger; or that it will find any acceptance with God, so long as thy conscience is defiled with the guilt of unrepented sin. "Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother" (at least do all that in thee lies toward being reconciled), "and then come and offer thy gift," verses 23 and 24.

And let there be no delay in what so nearly concerneth thy soul. "Agree with thine adversary quickly"; now, upon the spot; "while thou art in the way with him"; if it be possible, before he go out of thy sight, "lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge," lest he appeal to God, the Judge of all; "and the judge deliver thee to the officer," to Satan, the executioner of the wrath of God; "and thou be cast into prison," into hell, there to be reserved to the judgment of the great day. "Verily, I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." But this it is impossible for thee ever to do, seeing thou hast nothing to pay. Therefore, if thou art once in that prison, the smoke of thy torment must "ascend up forever and ever."

Meanwhile, "The meek shall inherit the earth." Such is the foolishness of worldly wisdom! The wise of the world had warned them again and again, "That if they did not resent such treatment, if they would tamely suffer themselves to be thus abused, there would be no living for them upon earth; that they would never be able to procure the common necessaries of life, nor to keep even what they had; that they could expect no peace, no quiet possession, no enjoyment of anything." Most true. Suppose there were no God in the world, or, suppose he did not concern himself with the children of men; but "when God ariseth to judgment, and to help all the meek upon earth," how doth he laugh all this heathen wisdom to scorn, and turn the "fierceness of man to his praise"! He takes a peculiar care to provide them with all things needful for life and godliness; he secures to them the provision he hath made, in spite of the force, fraud, or malice of men; and what he secures he gives them richly to enjoy. It is sweet to them, be it little or much. As in patience they possess their souls, so they truly possess whatever God hath given them. They are always content, always pleased with what they have: it pleases them, because it pleases God: so that while their heart, their desire, their joy is in heaven, they may truly be said to "inherit the earth."

But there seems to be a yet further meaning in these words, even that they shall have a more eminent part in "the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness"; in that inheritance, a general description of which (and the particulars we shall know hereafter) Saint John hath given in the twentieth chapter of the Revelation: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, and bound him a thousand years. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and of them which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Our Daily Bread devotional - According to Bill Farmer's newspaper column, J. Upton Dickson was a fun-loving fellow who said he was writing a book entitled *Cower Power*. He also founded a group for submissive people and called it DOORMATS (Dependent Organization Of Really Meek And Timid Souls—if there are no objections). Their motto was: "The meek shall inherit the earth—if that's okay with everybody." Their symbol was the yellow traffic light.

Mr. Dickson sounds like he'd be a lot of fun. What disturbs me about all of this, though, is that many people assume that such humorous ideas represent the true quality of meekness set forth in Matthew 5:5. Many, even in the church, think that to be meek is to be weak. But the opposite is true. What the Bible is talking about is a powerful virtue. The slogan "strong enough to be gentle"

comes close to defining it. True meekness is best seen in Christ. He was submissive, never resisting or disputing the will of God. His absolute trust in the Father enabled Him to show compassion, courage, and self-sacrifice even in the most hostile situations.

When we are meek, we will bear insults without lashing out in resentment or retaliation. We'll thank God in every circumstance, while using every circumstance, good or bad, as an occasion to submit to Him. Meekness would be weakness if it meant yielding to sin. But because it stems from goodness and godliness, it is a great strength.—M. R. DeHaan II ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Meekness is strength harnessed for service.

The Pursuit Of Happiness

Read: Matthew 5:1-10

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

Everyone is looking for happiness, and people follow many avenues trying to find it. They look for it in money, parties, self-improvement programs, fancy cars, luxurious homes, or promoting a cause.

That's the wrong list. The right one is found in Matthew 5. Jesus taught us that deep and lasting happiness comes from being right with God. He said we are blessed, or happy, when we are:

- Poor in spirit—recognizing our desperate need for God.
- Mourning—realizing the awfulness of sin and being genuinely sorry for it.
- Meek—demonstrating self-control, even when we are mistreated.
- Hungry and thirsty for righteousness—longing to be holy and pure.
- Merciful—showing mercy to others, just as God shows mercy to us.
- Pure in heart—being singleminded and sincere in our devotion to Christ.
- Peacemakers—sharing the peace Christ offers, and promoting peace with one another.
- Persecuted—being willing to suffer for Jesus' sake.

Looking for happiness? Follow Jesus' way.

Happy are they who love the Lord,
Whose hearts have Christ confessed,
Who by His cross have found their life,
Beneath His yoke their rest. —Bridges

Happiness depends on what you are, not on what you have.

By Dave Branon

A Picture Of Humility

Read: John 13:1-11

God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. —James 4:6

During the Easter season, my wife and I attended a church service where the participants sought to model the events that Jesus and His disciples experienced on the night before He was crucified. As part of the service, the church staff members washed the feet of some of the church volunteers. As I watched, I wondered which was more humbling in our day—to wash another person's feet or to have someone else wash yours. Both those who were serving and those being served were presenting distinct pictures of humility.

When Jesus and His disciples were gathered for the Last Supper (John 13:1-20), Jesus, in humble servanthood, washed His disciples' feet. But Simon Peter resisted, saying, "You shall never wash my feet!" Then Jesus answered, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8). Washing their feet was not a mere ritual. It could also be seen as a picture of our need of Christ's cleansing—a cleansing that will never be realized unless we are willing to be humble before the Savior.

James wrote, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6). We receive God's grace when we acknowledge the greatness of God, who humbled Himself at the cross (Phil. 2:5-11).

My faith looks up to Thee,

Thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine;
Now hear me when I pray, take all my sin away,
O let me from this day be wholly Thine! —Palmer

The most powerful position on earth is kneeling before the Lord of the universe.

By Bill Crowder

INSIGHT: In ancient Israel, the task of foot-washing was necessary because of the open shoes worn in streets filled with dirt and refuse. Because it was such an unpleasant task, it was usually assigned to the lowest servant in the house. Here Jesus Himself performed this menial job (John 13:3-5).

Meek—Not Weak

Read: Matthew 5:1-10

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

Most people consider meekness to be weakness. In a world dominated by the strong—ruthless dictators, callous drug traffickers, powerful corporate leaders—no one wants to be the wimp everyone takes advantage of. But is that what it means to be meek?

When Jesus said, “Blessed are the meek,” He was not advocating a spineless acceptance of life or a doormat mentality. He was telling His followers to be submissive to God and willing to put their strength under His control.

Think of it this way: There is a wonderful cooperation between a powerful horse and its rider. An animal of tremendous size and strength, seven or eight times the weight of a man, submits itself to its master’s control. A horse may race, leap, turn, prance, or stand motionless at the rider’s slightest command. That’s strength under perfect control. And that defines the Christian concept of meekness.

When we willingly place ourselves under the control of God, we are following the example of Jesus Himself while He lived on this earth. He submitted His power to the Father’s will (Jn. 5:30; 6:38; Heb. 10:9).

Yes, there’s great strength in meekness. It’s the power of God’s Spirit working through us when we yield to Him.

O Lord, control our willful hearts
And help us always see
That gracious, loving, gentle, kind
Is what we ought to be. —Sper

If you think meekness is weakness, try being meek for a week.

By David C. Egner

Matthew 5:5 Blessed Are The Meek

Read: Matthew 5:1-10

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

One problem with the English word meek is that it rhymes with weak, and people have linked the two words together for years. A popular dictionary offers a secondary definition of meek as “too submissive; easily imposed on; spineless; spiritless.” This causes some people to question why Jesus would say, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5).

Greek scholar W. E. Vine says that meekness in the Bible is an attitude toward God “in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting.” We see this in Jesus who found His delight in doing the will of His Father.

Vine goes on to say that “the meekness manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer is the fruit of power.....The Lord was ‘meek’ because He had the infinite resources of God at His command.” He could have called angels from heaven to prevent His crucifixion.

Jesus told His weary, burdened followers, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am [meek] and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matt. 11:29). He was the perfect model of meekness.

When we are tired and troubled, Jesus invites us to discover the peace of meekly trusting Him.

Love sent the Savior to die in my stead.
Why should He love me so?
Meekly to Calvary's cross He was led.
Why should He love me so?
—Harkness

God has two dwellings, one in heaven and the other in a meek and thankful heart. —Walton

By David C. McCasland

INSIGHT: The Greek word rendered “meek” in Matthew 5:5 is also rendered “gentle” (nas) or “humble” (nlt). Moses was commended as the meekest man on earth (Num. 12:3). And Jesus described His own disposition as meek: “I am gentle and lowly in heart” (Matt. 11:29; cf. 21:5). Because this word is used of Moses and Jesus, it is clear that meekness is not weakness. Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary defines meekness as “an attitude of humility toward God and gentleness toward men, springing from a recognition that God is in control. It is strength and courage under control, coupled with kindness.” As a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:23), meekness is a virtue that should characterize the Christian (Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12; 1 Peter 3:15). The Christian is to be “gentle, showing all humility to all men” (Titus 3:2).

In his book *Blessed Are Ye*, **F B Meyer** has this chapter on mercy -

THE HERITAGE OF THE EARTH

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.--Matt. 5:5.

THIS is the third regiment in the Lord's great army, the third gate into the blessed life, the third step downward to the throne. But what sort of character is indicated? And how do the meek differ from the poor in spirit?

There is evidently a distinction. The Lord said that He was meek and lowly in heart (Matt. 11:29); whilst the apostle plied his converts with motives borrowed from the lowliness and meekness of Christ (see note Ephesians 4:2). But what is that distinction? The key to it is suggested by a passage from that memorable last epistle, in which Paul the aged gave his final instructions to the young Timothy, and especially as to his behavior toward those who opposed themselves. "The servant of the Lord," he says, "must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves" (see notes 2 Timothy 2:24; 25). Here meekness seems specially demanded, when we are summoned to meet the opponents of our faith or the traducers of our personal testimony.

May we not say, therefore, that poverty of spirit and lowliness of mind are one and the same thing, and denote the attitude of the spirit toward God, when conscious of the immeasurable distance between His majesty and its minuteness, His purity and its sinfulness; whilst meekness is the attitude of the spirit toward men, and especially toward the wrong of the world--to the evil that men perpetrate on each other, and especially on the saints of God?

Lowliness will always be a characteristic attribute of true saintliness. The very elders fall down before the throne, and cast their crowns at the feet of God in utter self-abasement. But, in heaven, though meekness will always shine with its mild ray in the prismatic band of perfection, there will be less room for its exercise, for those that oppose will have been taken out of the way, whilst the enemy and avenger will have been forever stilled.

Meekness is consistent with strength of character.--It is not always thought so. Meekness is often used as a synonym for weakness, and meek people held in a considerable degree of contempt. There is no epithet that men of the world would more quickly and vehemently resent than the appellation "meek." A young officer would rather have a paving-stone hurled at him than this. A molluscous flabbiness, a contemptible namby-pambyism, an absence of backbone and muscle are the ideas which are generally summoned to our mind, when a man is classed among the meek.

Here, as so often, the superficial judgment of the world is falsified by a wide acquaintance with human character. Moses, the meekest of men, was the strong leader of the Jewish exodus, the Justinian of the Hebrew commonwealth, the Washington of the Jewish state. "The meek Paul was as strong in bearing persecution, as he had formerly been in inflicting it, and stood like a rock against the insidious and persistent attempts of the Judaizers. His strong common sense laid the broad foundations of the Church in such wise that Jew and Gentile could meet as one. His strong intellect has laid the march of religious thought for

eighteen centuries. And who shall say that Jesus Christ was not strong, viewing His nature only from the human side? Lamb though He was, He was the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. The meekness with which He received the insults of His foes did not veil the strength which extorted the involuntary homage of Pilate. What strength to resist the soft seductions of the tempting voices that bade Him spare Himself! What strength to carry out the purpose of redemption, though He knew well all it would involve!

Man's misconception of this strength of meekness is largely due to the gentle guise which she adopts, the restraint which she exercises over herself, her soft footfall, her modulated tones. They do not pierce through the hiding of her power, and realize that there is even greater power required for the restraining of the manifestations of power, than in letting them have free play. It is a stronger thing for a man of vehement and impetuous temper to speak and act gently in the face of great provocation, than to blurt out indignant words and bluster like a north-east wind! The soft hand that restrains the fiery steed, is obviously as strong, and stronger. Ah! passionate souls, that pour out showers of glowing coals at every provocation, ye little know how evident is your weakness, where ye vaunt yourselves of strength, and how much more evident your strength would be if ye made the unruly passions within heed the strong sway of a steadfast purpose.

The meek man resists the incitement of personal resentment.--When wrong approaches us, it awakens two sentiments in our hearts, the one personal, the other more general; the first is the quickest and keenest, the other manifests itself generally after years of learning in the school of experience. It is natural for us to be stung to the quick by a feeling of resentment under rebuff, or slight, or rudeness, or wrong. It is, perhaps, rather an acquirement when men so identify their wrongs with the evil of the world that they pass from the consideration of personal indignity, absorbed by the view of the sea of tears and blood which is weltering around the world, visiting every shore, invading every home.

With the meek man this order is reversed. When wrong is done to him, he is led by the grace of God to mourn over it, as an indication of the misery of the soul that perpetrates the wrong, and of the great weight of injustice and tyranny beneath which the world groans. In other words, he suffers like a child of the Great Father; understands something of the anguish of God's heart in contact with the wrong of the world; leaves God to vindicate and avenge, and prays for the speedy coming of the day when all wrongs shall be righted, and tears wiped. The meek man joins his prayers with those of Christ, the supreme Sufferer, that the Father would forgive those who do more evil than they know.

The meek man is a quiet man.--The Apostle Peter beautifully joins these two virtues together when he says that women are not to seek their adornments in jewels or dress, but in the garb of the meek and quiet spirit. The meek spirit is quiet. It bears and suffers in silence. It does not retail its wrongs, save in the ear of God, and then it does not ask Him to requite, but to convert. It weeps more for the wrong-doer than for its wounds, though they may bleed freely. It anoints its head, and washes its face, and appears not to men to suffer. Nipped by the sharp frost, it does not waste regret over its tender shoots, but strikes its roots deeper down into the dark loam of mother-earth. And out of this quiet confidence comes the heroic strength which bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things, till it conquers by the sheer force of patience. Nothing will so soon stop cannon shot as sand.

The meek man rather bears wrong.--When the apostle was urging his converts not to go to law with one another, he said to them, " Why do ye not rather take wrong?" What a mistake it is to allow the passion that would do us harm to ignite a kindred passion! Let us understand that the evil of speech and act which would injure us is set on fire of hell, and nothing could better fulfil the purpose of our great adversary than that the passions should pass from the wrong-doer to the wronged, and from him again to others. When the brazier is full of coals, and it is overturned so as to ignite a house, we have an illustration of the way in which a man whose soul is filled with rancor, malice, and envy may spread his thoughts and feelings. This is the great peril for us all. Men of quick temper are extremely inflammable. They are like touchwood to the flame, gunpowder to the spark. The meek man, on the contrary, meets wrong with a passive resistance which quenches its fire; with a calm and gentle answer he turns away wrath. With a resolute refusal to be inflamed, he establishes a quarantine through which the first germs of the epidemic cannot pass. The spirit of meekness resembles the eucalyptus: it is antiseptic, especially to the spread of passion. If we could only surround every angry man with a ring of meek souls, his passion would burn itself out with comparative small damage.

The meek man believes that the evil wrought to him is permitted by God for wise purposes.--As David climbs Olivet, Shimei comes out to curse him. Abishai urges to be allowed to still his vituperations forever, but the meek king says, " God hath said, Curse David. Let him curse." In those strong and bitter words David detected another voice, the voice of One who loved him as a Father, whilst He held his sin in utter detestation.

Oh, it is well always to look for the appointment or permission of God I His appointment in the chastisement which comes in the course of providence, His permission in the stripes which come to us from the hands of the children of men. It is easy to be meek toward Judas and the mailed band when we can say, Shall I not drink the cup which my Father hath put into my hands?

The meek are marvellously guided.--"The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach his way." The passionate soul is unable to detect the movements of God's guiding pillar. Passion raises a storm which blurs the heavens and ruffles the calm waters of the lake. In the eagerness with which the many waters of the soul argue and advise, the still small voice of the Divine Counsellor is drowned. When, therefore, you have been wronged, be calm and still. Wait for God. He will indicate the way He would have you take, the answer He would have you write, the acts of love with which you should retaliate.

The meek shall be vindicated.--It is foretold of the Messiah that He shall "reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." Not only hereafter, but now, is the judgment-seat set up, at which the oppressed plead their cause against their oppressors, and the Lord hearkens and hears. It is remarkable how perpetually wrongs perpetrated on the defenceless come back, like the boomerang of the savage, on their persecutors. Into the pit they dig they fall. Adonibezek cuts off the thumbs and toes of seventy kings, and his own are cut off. The Jews crucify Jesus of Nazareth, and so many of them are crucified by the Romans that wood fails for the crosses. The Rover sinks the Inchcape bell, and perishes on the rock from which it tolled.

The meek shall inherit the earth.--Even now the meek soul gets the best out of life. The world does not think so. It thinks that the meek must be worsted because they will not stand upon their rights, nor wield the sword in self-defence, nor meet men on their own terms. But, as ever, Christ's words stand the .test of experience. The meek find more pleasure in simple joys than wrong-doers in all their wealth. Pure hearts find wells of peace and bliss in common sights and sounds. There is no twinge of conscience or bitter memory of wrongdoing to jar on the sweet consent of holy song ever arising in nature. The lowly valley of Bunyan's Shepherd Boy had as much delight as the Delectable Mountains themselves. Do not be greatly concerned when wrong is done you. Possess your soul in patience. Hide under the wing of God. Do not let anything rob you of your power of being glad with children, birds, flowers, humble and innocent joys.

Without doubt the time is coming when the world itself will be conquered by the meekness and gentleness of Christ and His saints. The gentle dawn will master the blustering night; the soft-treading spring will quell the storms of winter. The knights of the cross, clad in the soft garments of holiness and gentleness, shall yet dissipate the dark squadrons of sin.

Wouldst thou have this meekness? There is no fountain from which it flows save that opened in the heart of Christ, and communicated by the Spirit of God, whose fruit it is. How meekly the Spirit of God has borne with the strife, rejection, contradiction of men. What consummate meekness was ever manifested by our holy Lord! Let us abide in Him, asking that He will repeat in us His characteristic grace, and enable us to breathe again upon the world the spirit by which He was animated in life and death.

O meek and gentle Saviour, who, when Thou wast reviled, revilest not again, when Thou didst suffer, threatened not, give me thou Spirit, that I may be calm and strong in the endurance of wrong, and overcome evil with good. **F. B. Meyer. Blessed Are Ye.**

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F B Meyer on THE PASSIVE SIDE OF THE BLESSED LIFE (Matt. 5:1-12.) (Click for first part of Meyer's discussion)

Many ancient authorities place **meekness** next, and it seems the natural order, for the soul that realizes its own nothingness and helplessness is likely to be meek. The meek are so occupied with their desire that God's grace should pass through them to their fellows that they are prepared to sink all considerations of their own standing and position so long as nothing may interfere with the effect for which they long. Their only thought is to carry their point, to bless men who do not want to be blessed, to vanquish hate by love, and rebellion by loving-kindness and tender mercy. They cannot afford, therefore, to be always standing on their own dignity and defending their own rights. These are willingly cast into the furnace to augment the flame, that the obdurate metal may be fused. "Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We are made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things; but all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace through the thanksgiving of many may abound to the glory of God."

The way to become **meek** is to be absorbingly taken up with the love of Christ for me. Be lowly before God, allowing His love to enter and fill thy heart, and thou wilt find it easy to be meek towards man. Thy pride will be

driven out by [the expulsive power of the new affection \(See Thomas Chalmers' great sermon\)](#). Thou wilt be prepared to accept flouts and sneers, if only thou canst bless and help others; even as God who answers not the blasphemous and hard things that are said against Him, but continues to send His rain and cause His sun to shine to bring men back in penitence to His heart.

It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that the meek are cowardly, deficient in strength of purpose or force of will: they are among the strongest and most strenuous of men. But they are strong in patience and strenuous in seeking the salvation of others. Let the cause of righteousness, justice, or truth be in question, none are so unbending or stalwart as they. Of the wrongs done to themselves they are disposed to take no count, but they dare not refrain from bearing witness, both by speech and act, whenever the sacred majesty of truth is assailed and in danger of being trampled under foot.

It is natural that the meek should become those that **mourn**. They feel keenly the evil of sin and the sanctity of sorrow; like Him who sighed as He touched the tongue of the dumb, groaned as lie came to the grave of His friend, and wept as He beheld the city.

Of all mourners, Jeremiah is one of the most plaintive. There is no lyric on the page of history to be compared with the Book of Lamentations:

"Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water."

"Mine eye poureth down and ceaseth not."

"Mine eye affecteth my soul."

When we turn from the sin of the world, the woes of men, the high-handed wrong of the great, and the abject poverty, sorrow, and anguish of heart of the oppressed, to the sin of our own hearts, the broken ideals, the frustrated purposes, the perpetual contrast between what we would be and what we are, surely our tears must have more salt in them, and cut deeper courses in their flow.

There surely is no need to show the way for mourning such as this. Look above thee and see the Christ stand, so pure, so chaste, so glorious in the light in which He arrays Himself as with a garment, and thou wilt abhor thyself and repent in the dust. Look around thee, and try to estimate the weight of a world's apostasy, the deluge of tears, the hurricane of sighs, that mount up to heaven. "Ah, it's a sair world, my masters!"

But the mourners are not content to shed tears only, they hunger and thirst after righteousness. St. Augustine says that they hunger and thirst after the Righteous One, "Jesus Christ the Righteous." They were made for Him, and will never be satisfied until they attain to the fruition of all their hopes, to know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings.

Without doubt such is their supreme desire, and as included in this they hunger and thirst for the ultimate triumph of righteousness in their own hearts and in the world of men. Every moan of pain, every consciousness of failure, every temporary triumph of reactionary and destructive forces, elicits the more urgent and persistent prayer, "Thy Kingdom come." The personal coming of the Lord is desired not primarily because the Bride desires the Bridegroom, but because the subject longs for the triumph of that Kingdom which is righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost.

This aspiration is noble. Some hungers are ignoble, despicable, and base. But this is shared in by God Himself, whose Spirit longs with inexpressible desire to bring to an end the present condition of things in the vindication and manifestation of His sons. The angels, as they behold the evil and pain of our earth; the champion of the rights of men, who wrestles with the hydra-headed and protean evil of his age; the wronged womanhood of the harem and the street; the dumb creation groaning and travailing with enormous and cruel wrongs, all join in this blessed hunger and thirst, the aspiration which amounts to a sure and certain hope that cannot be ashamed.

Thou needest not be taught this, for thou hast often felt it. Amid the violet light of a dying summer's day, when soft and lovely music, songs without words, is filling the entranced and listening air, when some heroic stand for liberty is drowned and quenched in blood, when the white robes of the soul have been stained and polluted by some recent fall, then the soul hungers with an intolerable pain, and thirsts, as the wounded hart for water-brooks, that righteousness should set up its blessed and all-conquering reign. **F. B. Meyer. The Directory of the Devout Life**