



# **MATTHEW**

The Savior-King and His Kingdom

## **Kingdom Character - Meek**

**Matthew 5:5**

Message #9 of 80 – S1038

**Sermon given on March 19, 2023**



Sunday Morning Service

**Pastor Rick Lancaster**

# Kingdom Character - Meek

## *Matthew 5:5*

### Opening Comments

- Open your Bibles to **Matthew 5**
- Today, we continue a series through the gospel of Matthew – **The Savior-King and His Kingdom**
- This week, law students at Stanford, interrupted a speaker with shouting, cursing, and screaming.
- The speaker had been invited by the school.
- He is a Federal Court judge speaking to future lawyers.
- The students disagree with his conservative stance and rulings.
- Their response was to silence him by disrupting his presentation.
- It is disgraceful, disrespectful, and childish.
- Most of what we see on the news, in our entertainment, in the music that is popular, or on social media is exactly opposite of the beatitude we are going to look at today.
- And the result of the lack of this character trait is people increasingly feeling lonely and hopeless.
- Suicide and suicidal ideation are rising rapidly, especially among teenage girls.
- And because the culture's influence is so pervasive, even Christians are not immune to the pull toward darkness.
- Jesus, in just a few verses, gave us the solution.
- The beatitudes are the character traits of those living in this world in a way that reflects the kingdom of God to the people around us.
- And for us as believers, these be-attitudes are the remedy for the influence of the wicked, God-hating, Christ-rejecting culture we are living in.
- Rightly understood, believed, and obeyed these beatitudes will help you to be whole in a broken world.
- Let's pray and look at the next one! - **Pray**

### Teaching

- **Kingdom Character - Meek**

- The first two beatitudes prepare us for the one we will look at today.
  - The first one – ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit.’
  - We acknowledge our absolute poverty before God.
  - We have nothing in us or in our lives that warrants God's love or grace or forgiveness or the promise of heaven.
  - Second, the response of being poor in spirit ought to be mourning over our lost condition.
  - Our own sins should grieve our heart in the same way they grieve God's heart.
  - And because we are poor in spirit, we know there is nothing we can do about it.
  - If the Spirit is working within us, that should result in absolute humility before God.
  - That humility in turn will be manifested in the third beatitude.
  - **Matthew 5:5**
  - ‘meek’ – NASB = gentle, NLT = humble.
  - Other words used to translate this word are poor or lowly.
  - Our culture views meekness as weakness.
  - In fact, it is just the opposite.
  - One commentator said...
- “Meekness is not weakness; rather it is the gentle spirit, the disciplined or controlled spirit.”**
- Someone else has said that meekness is strength under control.
  - If we needed an example of that we need look no further than Jesus.
  - Jesus, God in the flesh, came in meekness **Matthew 21:5**.  
Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.’
  - ‘lowly’ in that verse is the same Greek word translated as ‘meek in Matthew 5:5.
  - Jesus was a perfect example of meekness.
  - God's people, no matter how holy they are, cannot match His meekness perfectly.
  - The daily battle with the flesh gets in the way.
  - When we are hurt or offended because someone didn't treat us the way we believe they should, that is our flesh not practicing meekness.

- Our meekness is obscured by anger, frustration, even fear, just to name a few things.
- Turn to **Mark 9**
- Our ability to be meek is directly related to how much we trust God.
- Being poor in spirit acknowledges our inability to do anything that is right and good before God.
- It also knows that God is perfectly holy and able to do all that we need.
- Meekness is possible when we trust God to handle whatever circumstance comes our way.
- One day as Jesus walking with the disciples following, he notices something is up with them.
- **Mark 9:33-34**
- Jesus asks His disciples what they were arguing about.
- They are arguing about which of them was the greatest in the kingdom of God.
- Jesus could have taken that moment to remind them that He was the greatest.
- Or He could have reminded them about all the times they did things that disqualified themselves from being considered great.
- Instead, He does this...
- **Mark 9:35-37**
- Jesus, in gentleness, points them to the truth and to faith in God.
- Jesus, sitting in front of the disciples is God in the flesh.
- He had the right, authority, and power to make them do what He wanted them to.
- He didn't, He, in perfect meekness, gentleness, humility showed them a different way than the world's way – He showed them God's way to walk in this world.
- I believe God put me into this world to influence people toward His Son Jesus Christ.
- But that doesn't mean I am supposed to try to control them.
- Jesus was meek, gentle, humble, and lowly in everything He did.
- He did that while being God, the Son.

- If anyone had the authority and power to control people, it was Jesus.
- Where we see this most powerfully is in the events leading up and including the cross.
- Turn to **Matthew 27**
- Isaiah described the meekness of the Messiah **Isaiah 53:7**  
**He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.**
- The Bible teaches that Jesus was just like us in that He felt all the same kinds of things we feel, but without sin.
- In the hours leading up to His crucifixion, Jesus experienced more than most could endure.
- And he did it with meekness, humility, and gentleness.
- **Matthew 27:11-14**
- Before the horror of the crucifixion, Jesus was punched, slapped, spit upon, his beard pulled out, whipped, scourged, mocked, blasphemed, lied about, and betrayed. All within a 24-hour period.
- And it culminated with the cross, where the mocking continued.
- It is unthinkable that my Savior went through all of that for me.
- But not just for me, but also for all those who did those horrible things to Him.
- And He did it in perfect meekness.
- He is the perfect image of strength under control.
- During that entire ordeal He retained and restrained the power to destroy every one of those people who committed those atrocities against Him.
- As believers in Jesus Christ, we have the same power within us to live as He did.
- The Holy Spirit empowers us to live like Jesus.
- But just having the Holy Spirit is not enough.
- We must cooperate with Him to make us into Christ's image.
- That means we need to change from what we are to be what He is.
- Paul said that takes self-examination **2 Corinthians 13:5**.  
**Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.**

- Too many Christians are cruising through life just letting life happen to them.
- God wants us to be proactive in our faith.
- It starts by filling your heart and mind with the word of God.
- But then you must then think about what you are thinking about 2 **Corinthians 10:4-5.**

**For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...**

- Listen, the battle for your soul and for the souls of those around begins in your mind.
- And one of things we have to deal with first is to reject the world's view of meekness as weakness.
- What your mind is thinking about will determine what you do.
- This is easiest to do with the thoughts that stir you to strong emotions.
- When you feel something, ask yourself:
  1. Will this thought lead to me being meek like Jesus?
  2. Will this thought lead me to being more gentle or less gentle?
  3. Is this thought rooted in pride or in humility?
  4. Is this thought based on God's truth or on the world's views?
  5. Does this thought build me up or tear someone down?
  6. Would someone feel loved, or encouraged, or edified if I shared this thought with them?
- Questions like this can help to transform your mind to be more like Christ's.
- Here is a challenge for you this week – catch one thought that stirs you emotionally this week – write it down.
- Look at it in relation to the questions I shared or any other questions you think of.
- If you really want to grow, talk about it with someone spiritually more mature than you are.
- It's not homework – just something that might make you more like Jesus.
- When you sense your thinking is wrong, repent and ask God to help you to change.
- This verse ends with a promise, 'they shall inherit the earth.'

- The Bible is clear – God bestows grace and favor upon those who are meek or humble and He doesn't on those who are arrogant or prideful  
**James 4:6.**

**But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."**

- The NASB translates 'earth' as 'land.'
- This would have been a natural understanding for the Jews.
- The 'land' was the Promised Land and included more than just the geographic location of Canaan/Israel.
- It also included all the promises made to Abraham and His chosen descendants.
- The New Covenant came with its own set of promises to those who come to God through faith in His Son Jesus.
- To 'inherit the land' is to enjoy the peculiar blessings of the people of God under the new economy; it is to become heirs of the world, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ **Romans 8:16-17.**

**The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.**

- God's promises are experienced by faith and obedience to God's Word and will.
- And God's will for our lives is that we would be meek, gentle, and humble.
- Meekness is not weakness. Meekness is an expression of the fruit of the Holy Spirit, specifically of self-control.
- As we prepare to close, we'll look at one last Scripture – **Psalm 37**
- The world we are living in is pretty messed up.
- But as we live out these beatitudes, we don't have to be messed up by this world.
- As King David looked at the messed up world he was living in, God inspired him to write these words...
- **Psalm 37:7-11**
- Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
- Let's be more like Jesus this week! **Amen!**