

**ESF Lord's day service message  
9/30/2018**

**Blessed Are the Meek**

Matthew 5:5

*“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.”*

Human history is filled with wars. The reason for most of the wars is to conquer the earth. To conquer the earth and possess more land, people have been aggressively fighting each other. So, when we think about people who conquer something, usually we think about being aggressive or self-assertive.

But here, Jesus teaches us a different way of conquering the earth. Jesus teaches that we can conquer the earth not through aggressive, assertive fighting, but through meekness. Jesus does not teach just a theory on conquering the earth through meekness. He teaches us the truth of meekness through the example of His own life. He has conquered the earth not through aggressive fighting but thorough meekness. Jesus teaches and has proven that when a person is meek, he can conquer the earth, which means he can be the final winner.

**What is meekness?**

The Scriptural word “meek” comes from the Greek word “praus” which means “mild, gentle, and soft.” The word describes a soothing medicine, a gentle breeze, or a horse that had been broken and domesticated. A Medicine that is too strong will harm rather than cure. But when it is used gently, it will bring healing power. A wind out of control- hurricane or tornado is destructive. But when it is controlled it can generate lots of power. A horse is a powerful animal. It is a symbol of strength in the Greek world. But a wild and untamed horse is a useless animal. It can not be used for any of the tasks man has for it. However, if the horse is tamed it can be used for all kinds of tasks for which it was created. A tamed horse is a picture of power under control.

As the original Greek word implies, meekness means “power under control.” Meekness is not weakness, but power usually associated with anger under control. Meekness does not mean the absence of anger but the power of anger which is tamed and under control.

It is controlled power to conquer the human will and emotion -which is the most powerful weapon in the world.

Proverbs 16:32, *Better a patient person than a warrior, one with self-control than one who takes a city.*

### **What is the “earth” given to the meek?**

In the bible, the earth is a reference to the land of promise which the Israelites were moving into and living in. In the promised land, a land flowing with milk and honey, they enjoyed a life of peace, prosperity and contentment.

When Jesus taught this word, He was quoting Psalm 37:11: “*But the meek will inherit the land; and enjoy great peace.*” The psalmist David contrasted the meek with the wicked. “*A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found*” (Psalm 37:10). The way of the meek is the way of righteousness. The wicked “will not” but the meek will “inherit the earth.” The possession for the faithful is the “new earth” described by John in Revelation 21. Just as the children of Israel inherited the promised land, the meek follower of Christ will inherit the new heaven and new earth.

So the “earth” is not just the land, but the status of life in which God fulfills His blessed promise: a peaceful life, joyful life, righteous life, holy life, victorious life. The meek receive this blessed status of life.

### **How to be meek?**

#### **1. Be submissive to God’s will**

Meekness is shaped in our character through being submissive to God. When we surrender our will to God’s will, God shapes meekness in us.

Meekness says, “I am an imperfect and wild sinner but God is perfect and holy. He has always the best plan and will for me. So I surrender to God’s will.” Meekness is not a passive acceptance of circumstance; it is an active submission to God.

Jesus is our ultimate example of meekness through being submissive to God’s will (Matthew 4:1-11).

When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, the whole point of the temptation was whether or not Jesus would seek His will and desire or seek God’s will. Each time Satan approaches Him, he reminds Christ of who He is. He began with the statement, “if you are the Son of God.” That is to say, “Since you are who you are, you don’t have to do the Father’s will; why not do things in such a way as to exalt yourself?” Each time Jesus said “no” to Satan and said “yes” to the Father. Jesus refused to assert His ego and submitted Himself to the will of the Father.

In every single decision He made in His entire life, He was conscious of God’s will and submissive to God’s will. In the last minutes of His life, He also surrendered His will to God’s will. When He knew that He would be arrested, tortured and crucified, He wanted to avoid the horrible suffering. But through agonizing prayer, He surrendered His will to God’s will and took up the cross: “*Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done*” (Luke 22:42). When Jesus surrendered His will to God’s will He became meek. His anger was completely tamed and He could treat those who tortured Him and crucified Him with complete gentleness.

Peter explained Jesus attitude of meekness at that time in 1 Peter 2:23, “*When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*”

That is the essence of meekness. Submission to God’s will is the foundation of meekness.

Peter encourages us to follow Jesus’ example to be meek (1 Peter 2:21-23).

The enemy, the devil always provokes us to avoid the will of God-which is the way of the cross. The Devil shows us the easy way, the broad way, the way most people would take. The Devil says to you and me, “Bow down before me then I will give you the whole world.” It sounds to be an easy way to gain the world. But if we listen to the Devil’s voice we will pursue our will and will become arrogant. Although we are thinking we will gain the earth, we will lose everything in the end.

Whenever you have choices between a way of the cross and a way you want, pray to discern God’s will first and surrender your will to God’s will.

When we suffer while we are following the will of God, our wild, immature, and sinful nature is tamed and we are becoming meeker. That’s the attitude of David. When king Saul constantly persecuted him and tried to kill him, David believed God’s sovereign will in what Saul was doing to him. So even when he had opportunities twice to kill Saul, he didn’t kill him (2 Samuel 22:31-37). That was meekness. Through this meekness, God eventually gave the land of Israel to David.

When we surrender our will to God’s will, we may shed lots of tears, because it causes emotional and physical pains. But the pain is temporal. Through the pain God molds us to be meek and blesses us with the inheritance of the earth.

Believe this truth. Be submissive to God’s will even if it leads to the cross, even if you must shed tears of pain. God will surely prepare “the earth” for you.

## **2. Be submissive to God’s discipline**

Meekness is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. It takes time for us to bear the fruit of meekness. We can’t be meek in a day or even in a year. To shape the fruit of meekness of the Holy Spirit in our character, God repeatedly disciplines us. Jesus states this truth this way: *He cuts off*

*every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful (John 15:2).*

While we receive God's discipline day after day, there is a gradual improvement in bearing the fruit of meekness in us. So when we are disciplined by God we must endure with hope.

*Hebrews 12: 6-7, the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son." Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?*

Then how does God discipline us to be meek?

God disciplines us through difficult circumstances or situations.

God disciplined Moses through simple and harsh circumstance in the desert for forty years. Originally, he was a man with a temper, a man of flesh. He killed somebody in Egypt and became a fugitive in the desert. But through the life in the desert, God disciplined and molded him to be meek. He became a meek person through the discipline.

Jonah did not want to follow God's will to save the people of Nineveh. He did not want to follow God's will to go to the city and tell the people God's way of salvation. So he ran far away by ship. But through a furious storm at the sea, God disciplined him to be submissive to His will.

Are you living in very difficult circumstances? Are you living in the midst of a furious storm? Believe that God uses this circumstance to discipline you. Believe that God will never ruin your life with this circumstance but mold you to be a person He can use. Believe that God's gracious hands work in you to produce "meekness." Believe that God is preparing "the earth" for you to receive. Endure difficult circumstances with this faith and with this hope.

God also disciplines us to be meek through people around us.

God says in 2 Samuel 7:14, *I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands.*

God molds us to be meek through people who misunderstand us, who are harsh to us, who treat us unfairly and unjustly, who deceive us, who betray us, or who hurt us. When you see those people directly and think only about what they are doing to you, it may be very hard or even impossible for you to forgive them.

The enemy, the Devil always uses these people to provoke you to anger and do something destructive in anger. Do you know what the enemy, the Devil is telling you every time people hurt you? “Yell at them. Hate them. Get even with them. Punish them. Fight with them. Destroy them.” The Devil always wants you to be harsh, impatient with people who bring trouble to you. The devil wants you to live in bitterness.

If we listen to the Devil’s voice, we will engage in the war of the flesh. Although we think we are winning in fighting, we are actually losing, Losing what? Losing the spiritual battle. Losing what is more important than just asserting our way to others. We will lose the opportunity to let God’s hands mold us to be meek.

You may think you can’t be gentle to the people who are hurting you. But if you see that God’s hands are molding you to be gentle through these trials and pains they are causing, you can be gentle to them. Think that God is bringing marvelous blessing to you through them. God is preparing to bless you to inherit the earth! Look at the blessing not the people. Look at what God is doing. Think about the benefit God shapes in you through these people.

Take the trials caused by people as an opportunity to receive God’s discipline. When people hurt you personally, take it as an opportunity to

receive God's discipline, to grow in meekness and bear the fruit of meekness. When you get angry at people, don't take action immediately with anger. Just wait one more day, one more week, or one more month to pray and listen to God and be submissive to God's discipline through the people. When someone hurts you, be forgiving, not begrudging (Galatians 6:1). When someone disappoints you, be understanding, not demanding (Proverbs 15:1). When someone restricts you, be submissive, not disobeying (Philippians 4:5-6a).

God will surely tame your anger and help you to control your anger and mold you to be meek. God will bless you to win the people through meekness. God will let you inherit "the earth."