***MT 5:5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.***

*Introduction*

I will forgive you if you cannot remember the past beatitudes that we have looked at, for it has been a number of weeks since we looked at ***Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.***

I do not intend to go over the past sermons this morning, they are on the website and you can download them if you wish.

As we look through the beatitudes, this one that we are going to consider this morning is the surprise, because it is so completely and utterly opposed to everything the natural man thinks.

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth”. World conquest – possession of the whole universe – *given to the meek, of all people!*

The world thinks in terms of strength and power, of ability, self-assurance and aggressiveness. This is the world’s view of conquest and possession.

The more you assert yourself, express yourself, organize yourself and manifest your power and abilities the more likely you are to get on.

But Jesus said “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth – and they alone.

So again, as we have seen before, at the very beginning the Christian is altogether different from the world. It is a difference in quality, an essential difference. He is a new man, a new creation, he belongs to an entirely different kingdom.

The world cannot understand him, he is an enigma to the world. And if you and I, in this sense, are not problems and enigmas to the non-Christians around us, then this tells us a great deal about our profession of the Christian faith.

These words must have come as quite a shock to the Jews of Jesus day, because although Jesus was talking to his disciples and therefore to the Church, Matthew was primarily writing for the Jews who had their own ideas of the kingdom of God.

Their ideas of the kingdom of God that would be ushered in by the Messiah, was one of materialism and militaristic, they thought in terms of fighting and conquest in the material sense.

But Jesus says “NO” my kingdom is not like that. The meek will inherit the earth, what a contrast for the Jews thinking.

This beatitude also comes as a contrast to the modern day Church’s thinking also. The Church today appears to have a tendency to try and fight the world, sin and the devil by uniting together in “unity”. Let’s all come together as one huge organization to face the organized enemy.

Then we shall have an impact, then we shall conquer the world for Jesus.

But Jesus says “Blessed are the meek”. Not those who trust in their own abilities to organize and form ministries, but the very opposite.

We see this throughout the Scriptures. In the story of Gideon we see not a mighty force assembled, but the cutting down from thousands to 300.

**What is the relationship between this and the other beatitudes?**

Well first of all we notice that it follows on from what has gone before. There is a logical connection between these different beatitudes. Each one suggests the next and leads to the next.

They are not haphazard.

There is first of all that fundamental assumption about being ‘poor in spirit’. This is the primary spirit that leads in turn to a condition mourning as we become aware of our sin; and this in turn leads to the spirit of meekness. This is the logical connection of one following on from and leading to the other.

But, there is also another thing to emphasize here, and that is as we go through the beatitudes, each one becomes more difficult that the last.

The first beatitude asks us to look at our own weakness and inability. It confronts us with the fact that we have to face God, not only in the 10 commandments and in the moral law, but also in the sermon on the mount, and in the life of Christ Himself.

Anyone who feels that he can accomplish anything spiritually in his own strength, has not started the Christian pathway.

No, it says to us we are utterly helpless, we have nothing, we are poor in spirit.

This leads on to realizing our own sinfulness, our own true nature, realizing that we are helpless because of sin living in us. Our best actions and thoughts are sinful, so much so that the Great Apostle Paul says “O what a wretched man that I am”. Realising our state we mourn over our sinfulness.

Now we come to something even more searching.

Why us this? Because we come to a point where we are beginning to be concerned for other people.

It is difficult enough to see, if I am honest with myself, my own worthlessness and helplessness when I see the demands of the gospel, to come face to face with my sinfulness that drags me down. And although I may be ready to face these things, I now come to the more difficult thing of someone else saying things about me.

I find it difficult when I call myself a sinner, but it is even more difficult when you call me a sinner! When other people are looking at my life!

I instinctively resent it, it’s much easier to condemn yourself than allow someone else to do it.

I’m sure you will agree that this is more humbling and humiliating than anything that has gone before.

**So, who is this meek person? What is he like?**

I suppose the best way to approach this is too look at some meek people from the Bible. After all there are many illustrations.

Let’s look at Abraham.

Abraham was a portrait of meekness. Remember how he dealt with Lot when they needed to part company. Abraham had every right to choose the best way for himself. But instead he allowed Lot to assert himself and choose the best without a murmour or complaint – that is meekness.

What about Moses?

Moses was described as the most meek man on the face of the earth.

***NU 12:3 (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.)***

 When you look at his character you see a man that would not assert himself, as in lift himself up, but rather was humble and would abase himself.

David, the young man who killed Goliath, gave the glory to God and when he had been anointed King and was waiting for the departure of Saul, put up with suffering from Saul that made him flee, rather than assume his rightful position.

In the NT we see Stephen and others, portraits of meekness.

Paul, the mighty man of God, The Apostle, the writer to the Churches, yet suffered at the hands of those in the Church and his own countrymen in so many ways.

Yet as you see his letters you see this character of meekness and humility coming out.

And what about Jesus, the supreme example who said

***MT 11:28-29 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.***

In his reaction to other people, and especially in the way he suffered persecution and scorn we see his humility.

***MT 12:18-20 "Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations.***

***He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory.***

**Well then, What is meekness?**

Before we look at this, it is worth remembering that we are talking about the beatitudes. These are not natural qualities, it is not a matter of our natural disposition.

We cannot say “I was not made that way”, none of us are.

We cannot say as a Christian that they are not for me, Every Christian, no matter what their temperament or their psychology might be, is meant to be like this.

The meek men we have look at briefly, were not wimps, they didn’t fall apart when someone went “Boo” at them.

No practically and naturally speaking they were men of great physical character. David was an accomplished soldier who led armies into battle and gained great victories, The Lord himself took on the authorities in the temple, he made a whip and turfed them out.

Paul persecuted the early church, dragging men and women out of their homes, he was a strong character. Yet they were all meek, humble.

Let me emphasize what meekness is by saying –

Meekness does not mean indolence, people who are naturally meek are not meek they are apathetic, indolent.

Nor does it mean flabbiness – I use the term advisedly, I am not talking about how a person may look, I am talking easy going, they tend to say they are meek. But they are not meek at all they are flabby.

Meekness does not mean nice either. There are a lot of ‘nice’ people, they are born naturally nice, but they are not meek.

It is not a spirit of compromise either – anything rather than have a disagreement.

No! Meekness is compatible with great strength, it is compatible with great authority and power. It has nothing to do with our outward manner.

So, What is meekness.

Dr Martin Lloyd Jones puts it like this:

*Meekness is essentially a true view of oneself, expressing itself in attitude and conduct with respect to others. It is therefore two things. It is my attitude towards myself; and it is an expression of that in my relationship to others.*

You see how it follows being poor in spirit and mourning. A man can never be meek unless he is poor in spirit. He can never be meek unless he has seen himself as a vile sinner. These things must come first.

But when I have a true view of myself in terms of poverty of spirit, and mourning because of my sinfulness, I am led on to see that there must be an absence of pride.

The meek man is not proud of himself, he does not glory in himself, he does not assert himself.

Of course, I am talking spiritually here. There is nothing wrong with a feeling of self achievement in completing something, or wanting to win a race.

The meek man does not demand anything for himself.

Paul says:

***PHP 2:1-8 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.***

***Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!***

Let me go a bit further.

A meek man is not sensitive about himself. We live in a sensitive world where people get easily upset over silly things.

He doesn’t spend his life watching everything he does, he does not worry about what other people say, or wallow in self pity.

To become meek means to have finished with all that.

John Bunyan said ***He that is down need fear no fall***

The man that is truly meek is the one who is amazed that God and man can think of him as well as they do and treat him as well as they do.

*Conclusion*

As we close, we must briefly ask “what happens to this man?”

***For they shall inherit the earth***

We can sum it up by saying, the meek already inherit the earth, in this way – A man who is truly meek is a man who is always satisfied, he is a man who is already content.

Paul puts it this way:

***2CO 6:3-10 We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.***

Meekness is a direct fruit of the Spirit. It is offered to us and is possible for us all.

What have we to do?

We must face this sermon on the mount, meditate upon what it says, look at the examples and above all look upon the Lord Himself.

Then we must humble ourselves and confess with shame, not only the smallness of our stature but our utter imperfection. Then we must finish with self, so that He who bought us at such a price may come in and possess us wholly.

Amen