

**Text: Matthew 5:5 (Pew Bible pg.958)**

**Title: “Blessed Submission”**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Open your Bibles to Matthew 5. Once again I'll ask you to stand as I read through all eight of Jesus' statements known as the Beatitudes. I'm doing this in the hope that as we hear them repeatedly they will soak into our souls. It's also a great way to memorize them. Read vv.1-12. It says that Jesus sat down and His disciples came to Him and He taught them. What if that happened today? What if you and I came not to be entertained or amused, but we sat with the word of Jesus to be transformed. May that happen as we hear again these radical statements of Jesus. Please be seated.

**ILLUSTRATION** – This weekend was the release of “Man of Steel,” the latest movie about Superman, our flying defender of the American way. He's still able to leap tall buildings and is faster than a speeding bullet ... even though he is about eighty years old. What you may not know is that Superman was actually created back in the 1930s by a couple of teenagers. You see, in those days America needed a hero, a super-hero, at a time when she was facing the Great Depression and a looming world war. And so the caped crusader would inspire hope in the sagging, fearful hearts of Americans.

Well, it was similar when Jesus first spoke the words of the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount. Remember that as we are studying these radical statements of Jesus, what we have running in the background here is the Kingdom of God. Jesus' ministry at this point was consumed with proclaiming the coming of the Kingdom, teaching the way of the Kingdom, and demonstrating the power of the Kingdom through miracles.

But many Jews in Jesus' day had a faulty understanding of the Kingdom of God. They believed that God's Messiah would come like a mighty super-hero. They thought God's Kingdom would come and immediately give them political and military dominance over their enemies, like the Romans. They wanted God's Kingdom to come, but they wanted it to come on their terms. And in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is saying, “No, my Kingdom isn't like that. That is not the way I intend to save the world.”

So we come to the third radical statement of Jesus:

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

Talk about a radical statement! World domination is usually associated with people who strong, powerful, self-assured and aggressive ... people with swagger. And yet we hear Jesus congratulating people who are meek because ultimately they will be the ones who inherit the earth. That's how radical these statements are. And so it is with Kingdom people who live by Kingdom priorities.

So as in all of these statements of Jesus there is first...

### **1. THE RADICAL ATTITUDE**

## **Matthew 5:5a - Blessed are the meek...**

"Meek" is one of the most misunderstood words in the Bible. Meekness, in the eyes of the world, is weakness. Just the sound of that word lends itself to that ... meek. But don't be misled; there's more to this word than you might imagine. The word actually means "gentle."

It's Father's Day and it's a good time to remind you guys that some of the great men of the Bible are described as being "meek" or "gentle." Paul wrote to Timothy about the qualities of a man of God:

**I Timothy 6:11 - But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.**

And it isn't just a quality that men of God are to possess. It's also a quality possessed by great women of God. In 1 Peter 3 Peter coaches the women about cultivating inner beauty.

**I Pet.3:3-5 - Your beauty should not come from outward adornment ... Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful.**

Now these statements of Jesus are not random. They flow in a logical sequence. Here's one way of linking these first three statements of Jesus: It starts with the HEAD where we understand and know that we are spiritually bankrupt ... dead broke. Then it moves to the HEART where we feel the grief, sorrow and mourning that comes from our helpless condition. Then it moves to our HANDS where we are willing to turn loose and submit all that we are to Christ for Him to do in and for us what we cannot do for ourselves. That is meekness. It is all that we are yielded to the control of another.

**ILLUSTRATION** – Now we live in Fort Worth and we know about cows and horses. And so we might have a little advantage in understanding how this word was originally used. If you go to a rodeo you'll likely see two kinds of horses: PHOTO – STALLION. First, there are the horses in bare back riding or saddle-bronc riding. These horses are as wild as they can be. There's never been any attempt to do anything but to keep them wild, because the goal is to test a cowboy's ability to stay on top of something that's totally out of control. PHOTO – CUTTING HORSE. Now the second kind of horse you'll see are the horses that compete in barrel racing or cutting horse competition. These animals are just the opposite. They are the epitome of control. Their massive strength has been harnessed and it's under the control of the one riding them. They can maneuver around barrels or cut a calf out of a herd with just the gentlest touch of the rider on the reins. Is that horse any less strong than the wild horse? No, the difference is that their strength has been harnessed and is under the control of another.

That's the meaning of this word "meek."

This is true for us as we enter the Kingdom of God when we are saved. What has to happen is by the conviction of the Holy Spirit we come to know with our heads that we are lost. That produces in our hearts a brokenness over our sin and the willingness to put our faith in Christ and yield all that we are

to Him. And when we've come to that point that is when God can really do something with our lives. Until then we'll always try to keep control, and manage things on our own. And we will miss what Christ alone can do for us.

And it's not just true when we enter the Kingdom of God; it's true every day as we live in the Kingdom of God. This is the humble and gentle way we live our lives every day as Christ-followers.

Now the radical attitude is matched with ...

## **2. THE GRACIOUS BENEFIT**

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

Now remember that many Jews in Jesus' time were thinking about dominating the earth under the leadership of a super-hero messiah. But Jesus doesn't talk to people about *dominating* the earth ... He talks to them about *inheriting* the earth. There's a difference. To "inherit" means to receive your portion. You inherit something that you didn't earn. It's all grace.

And Jesus is looking off into the future. If you will read your Bible carefully you will understand that there is day coming in the future when Jesus Christ will return. Just as sure as He came, lived, died, rose again and ascended back to heaven, the Bible says Jesus will come again. He will defeat every enemy of the Kingdom of God until there will be only one kingdom standing ... the Kingdom of God. And Jesus Christ will reign forever and ever. This is what Paul had in mind when he wrote:

**2 Timothy 2:11-12 - Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us;**

Paul says to Timothy, "Do not be worried about your suffering, Timothy. Be meek and suffer and you will reign with Him. Let Christ fight your battles. You are going to inherit the earth with Him."

And knowing that gives us a certain strength now. I know where all this is going. My Savior is the One who will one day be seen by all as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And I will reign with Him. So what if I'm not on the winning side now? I am content and satisfied because in Christ I have all.

**Philippians 4:13 - I can do everything through him who gives me strength.**

Now I want to close by asking you four questions that are listed in your notes. In just a little while we will share together in the Lord's Supper and the Bible says that we should not do so without first examining ourselves. So let's just examine ourselves as it relates to this matter of meekness.

- **Are you teachable in your spirit?**

Remember the illustration of the stallion being domesticated? That stallion can only be broken if it is teachable. There are some animals that just can't be broken, and they are really worthless.

You see, when meekness is working in our lives it keeps pride at bay so that when we're confronted with the truth we can willingly submit to it. It means we can let someone correct us or challenge us without bristling at it. It's not that we're incapable of defending ourselves. It's that we recognize that God wants to teach us, and so long as we think we know everything, He can't. Are you teachable in your spirit?

- **Are you gentle with other people?**

Remember how often the word “meek” is translated “gentle.” Meekness is an attitude I have before God and toward other people. Meekness allows us to be gentle with other people. It means we don't step on people and run over people to get our way. It means you live life, fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit of God.

This shows up in the way we treat people who have failed.

**Galatians 6:1 - Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.**

Now dads, think about this for a moment. The last time you corrected your children how did you do so? Was it "gently" ... with strength under control? You have the power to mash your child, but meekness lets you correct them gently, even when the discipline has to be severe, it must still be with a gentle spirit.

- **Are you durable in your circumstances?**

By that I mean does this quality drive the way you face trials and adversity in your life? If you're meek you can endure these things trusting in God.

Actually Jesus probably had Psalm 37 in mind when He spoke the words, “Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth.” Follow along on the screen as I read that passage:

**READ PSALM 37:7-10**

One day God will completely reclaim His earthly domain, and those who have become His children through faith in His Son will rule that domain with Him. One day God will settle all accounts. We can rest in the fact that we do not have to bring about justice for ourselves. God will do it. One day the Lord will take the earth from the hands the wicked who have ruled and ruined His creation. We don't have to fret and worry about the injustices done to us. Yes, it gives us a sense of peace and hope today!

- **Are you available to the Spirit?**

You may think, "I have trouble letting go. I want to stay in control. This is more than I can do." Yes, it is. This is a quality that is a manifestation of the life of the Spirit of God within you. But with the Spirit's help you can be this kind of person.

The Beatitudes are sort of like the Law in this respect. We read these statements and we know in our hearts that we cannot be and do these things in our own strength. Our natural tendency is not to be meek; it is to be in control. So this is a quality that we don't produce in order to be right with God. It is a quality that is produced in us by His grace because we are right with God. The Spirit of God has to produce this in us; it is so foreign to our own human tendency.

**Galatians 5:22-23a - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, GENTLENESS and self-control...**

**ILLUSTRATION** – Remember that Superman disguised himself as mild-mannered Clark Kent ... a geekish, clumsy, soft-spoken guy. But, of course, when he jumped in the phone booth or a closet, all of that changed ... he came out Superman. So he only appeared to be mild-mannered; he was really Superman. Well, here's the deal with us. We are not Superman or Superwoman. Our weakness is real. It's only as the real hero ... the God/Man, Jesus Christ, comes to dwell within us that we become strong.

You see, these qualities are only perfected in Jesus Christ. They all point us to Him. In fact, Jesus Himself possessed this quality.

**Matthew 11:28 - "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.**

**Matthew 11:29 - 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.**

And in the heart of Jesus was an attitude we must adopt:

**Philippians 2:5 - Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:**

**Philippians 2:6 - Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,**

**Philippians 2:7 - but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.**

**Philippians 2:8 - And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!**

LORD'S SUPPER

**Matthew 26:26 - While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."**

**Matthew 26:27 - Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.**

**Matthew 26:28 - This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.**