

Jesus spoke on a mountain about the meek Sunday 30th March 2014

“Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.” (Mat.5:5)

Beloved in the Lord,

Have you ever thought about these words of Jesus, that there is a great inheritance for those who are meek/gentle? They shall inherit the earth.

The word that Jesus used is usually translated as either meek or gentle. It basically means one who is not easily angered, not short fused; not a person who seeks to have his or her way all the time at the expense of others. A gentle spirited person.

Jesus said that the meek are blessed. This is in stark contrast to the general opinion in the world. The worldly person is always going on about his rights, about his desires. The worldly person is always striving for, or about something – proving a point and so forth. Standing up for his rights.

Jesus raises meekness as a blessed state to be in.

The first thing we need to understand is that meekness is not weakness. Moses was described as a meek spirited person, but he certainly was not weak. It is also interesting that meekness was a characteristic that was formed in his walk with God. He wasn't always meek. In fact, before he met the Lord, he was arrogant, and quick tempered. He thought that he would save his people in his own strength and ability. It took God 40 years of having Moses in the back side of a desert herding sheep, to defuse his temper, deflate his ego, and turn him into a useful servant.

The Apostle Peter was not a meek person by nature. He was rough, quick tempered, brash. When Jesus was arrested, it was Peter that chopped the ear off one of those who had come to arrest Jesus. But later Peter writes: ***“but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”*** (1.Pet.3:4)

You see a person who is of a gentle and quiet spirit is precious in God's sight. Why? Because such a person reflects the heart of God.

The Apostle Paul was not a meek man, a person of gentle and quiet spirit before he met Jesus. In fact he was just the opposite. He was a fanatic, who was relentless in persecuting the Christians. He was arrogant and very ambitious.

But later in his letter to the Galatians Paul writes about the fruit of The Holy Spirit:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22-23)

So it is clear that meekness/gentleness is a fruit of The Holy Spirit. That means that we cannot say oh well I was born with a hot temper and there is nothing I can do about it. The fruit of The Holy Spirit grows in us as we daily surrender ourselves to Jesus. When we live and walk in The Holy Spirit, then gentleness is a fruit that appears in our life.

Billy Graham, in a sermon on this passage stated: *“Meekness is a precious gemstone that has many facets. It is a spiritual quality that can be viewed from many different aspects.”*

He is right. Meekness is truly a precious quality, that like a good gemstone reflects beauty. It reflects the very heart of God.

Meekness means mildness. This is something that we rarely see in today’s society, where people are becoming more and more aggressive, more and more impatient and much ruder as well. The further society drifts from God, the worse it becomes.

One example is road rage. It is on the increase.

Billy Graham wrote:

*“I think that in the last few years alone, much of the world has returned to the barbarian age. While love for our fellow man is less spoken about, barbaric and heartless behaviour is increasing. A return to barbarism impacts all of our life. Neighbours are cursing each other; fighting in the playground and on the streets amongst our youth is taking on the shades of hooliganism. Mothers and fathers are arguing and families are falling apart. Many of high rank and authority are swearing at each other, and are succumbing to nasty arguments and bickering forgetting their own dignity. How did this wild behaviour enter our society? It is because Jesus words “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” are foreign to us. We applaud immorality, not morality. Meekness, good habits and morality have decreased. We extol violence, crudity, immorality. We have returned to the barbaric “tooth and claw” age. We are rich in knowledge, but poor in wisdom, rich in culture and arts, but poor in faith, meekness and goodness. We have become a people who are evil speaking, easily provoked, rude, confounded. But the Bible says **“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.” (James 3:17)***

So far Dr. Billy Graham.

I think that he is absolutely right in saying that the major problem is that we have forgotten Jesus teaching, especially our text today, that blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

To be meek, we really need to be as we considered a few weeks ago, poor in spirit. The statement made in the first Beatitude is **“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”** It is only when we empty ourselves of ourselves that we can truly be of a gentle or meek spirit.

Paul writes: ***“I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.” (Romans 6:19)***

The choice is ours. If we present/ surrender our members, that is ourselves to serve God, then we are blessed, and Jesus said that we would inherit the earth. The opposite is also true.

What does it mean to inherit the earth? It simply means that we receive from God, everything that we need, and so much more besides. God loves to give generously to those who love Him.

Luther made a very true observation that very often those who are striving the most to keep their possession, who are always fighting to defend their rights and so on, end up losing everything, whereas the gentle in spirit inherit the earth.

God’s way is always blessed and right.

A meek person, a person who has a gentle spirit experiences great peace. A gentle spirited person knows how to simply let go and let God. They know how to surrender all to Jesus. Over and over again, the Bible tells us that God is a righteous judge and that He will take care of all things.

Billy Graham writes: *“Blessed are the meek. Happy is the person who trusts in God. Happy are those who have entrusted their joy, their future into the hands of their Creator. Happy are those who let go of all, to let God in.”*

I say Amen to that. Truly we are blessed when we let go and let God. When we lay it all down and allow Jesus to take over.

For example: If someone hurts us, or wrongs us, it is better not to avenge ourselves, but leave it in God’s hands.

This does not come naturally. We need to work on it. A while ago we considered the fact that we should always ask ourselves “what would Jesus do? How would Jesus react in this situation?” The more we learn to live like this, the nearer we come to God.

We know from nature, that a well broken in horse, is a much more useful horse than an unbroken horse. They both have the same energy and power, but when that power is controlled it is much more useful.

God is shaping us and training us; breaking us in, so that we would be useful, so that we would be beautiful. He wants our witness to be such, that brings Him glory, that honours His name.

What we really need to understand, is that God loves each one of us very much. He wants the best for us, and whatever means that He uses to train us and shape us is the best means. Anything He does, is for our good.

That is what our Heavenly Father is like. We need to take on board Jesus teaching in the light of this truth.

We need to allow these words of Jesus, to act as our personal trainer. Our trainer has our very best interests at heart.

Everyone of these statements of Jesus come with a promise of blessing.

May we make a commitment to be meek/gentle spirited. We will achieve this if we give Jesus total control over our lives. We need to pray along with the Psalmist these words everyday:

“Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins;

Let them not rule over me;

Then I will be blameless,

And I shall be acquitted of great transgression.

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart

Be acceptable in Your sight,

O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer.” (Psalm 19:13-14)

As we begin each new day, may we surrender all to Jesus, who has so loved us, and may we allow Him to lead, guide, shape and mould us.

As we do, we will see a change in our lives and we will experience the truth that:

“Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.”

Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.