

Dr. Bert Jones • North Carolina Capitol Commission • Bert.Jones@capitolcom.org

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

This is yet another Beatitude statement that flies in the face of worldly wisdom. Our culture values power and despises or pities weakness. Many successful people reject the Christian faith because they view it as a “crutch” they don’t need.

Many people wrongly believe that meekness means weakness. Describing someone as “meek” conjures up the image of a timid, pitiful, shy wallflower. However, this imagery could not be further from the truth.

Meekness is not at all weakness, it is power... power under control. Its essence can be found in how the Greek word that is translated “meekness” was commonly used in that culture.

One use of the word (*Gr. pous*) would describe medicine given to patients with a high fever to settle them and allow them to rest and sleep. The same word was used by sailors to describe a gentle, cooling breeze. And, the word could be used to describe a wild horse or a colt that was broken and made ready to be used on a farm or for transportation.

Medicine, the wind, and a horse all have considerable power. When excessive and out of control, their powers can be very dangerous and even deadly. But under proper control, they are greatly beneficial. When the power is under control, this is called meekness.

There are many examples in the Bible. Moses was not at all a weak, timid man, but God identified him as the meekest man on earth. Abraham had authority (power) over his nephew, Lot. Yet, he gracefully allowed Lot to choose how their land would be split. Abraham exercised meekness, and God blessed him. Joseph in the OT was sold into slavery by his brothers. He later became the prime minister of Egypt, and had complete power over them, but showed meekness – power under control.

Meekness is not demonstrated when we are wrong, but when we are right. If we are in the right and have the power to hurt someone that is wrong, meekness allows us to show grace.

On at least two occasions David had the power and opportunity to easily kill King Saul, who often tried to kill him. He would have seemed justified to many, but he kept his power under control. He trusted in God to fight his battle.

Again, we can look to Christ as our perfect example. No one was ever more courageous than Him, yet He said, “I am meek and lowly in heart” (*Matt. 11:29*).

This Beatitude statement is very similar to *Psalms 37:11*, “*the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace.*” The writer of Psalm 37 was facing many troubles. Evil people were slandering him and even plotting to take his life.

How do we respond to difficult circumstances in our lives? Psalm 37 tells us not to fret about it. The sinful human nature would lead us to be angry, fret over things, and fight back. The meek will submit themselves and their enemies to God and let Him take care of it, rather than taking matters into their own hands in anger.

Psalm 37 reminds us to delight in the Lord, wait patiently for Him, refrain from anger, turn from evil and do good. When others focus their attention on themselves or their adversaries, the meek will focus their attention on the Lord.

Meekness should also describe our attitude towards God’s Word. *James 1:19* tells us to be “*quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger.*” Then verse 21 tells us to receive God’s word with meekness. In Chapter 4, James gives a reason for fights and quarrels among believers: a stubborn attitude toward God’s word.

Once again we see a stark contrast between Saul and David. In *1Samuel 13*, Saul disobeyed God’s message through Samuel. He blamed Samuel and the people; everyone but himself. On the other hand, when God’s prophet Nathan confronted David about his sin of adultery and murder, David received the message with meekness, confessing “*I have sinned against the Lord,*” (*2Samuel 12:13*).

Our attitude toward fellow Christians that sin should be one of meekness as well. Some have a tendency to gossip about it, or puff themselves up by comparison. But, Scripture says “*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,*” (*Galatians 6:1*).

That word for “restore” is one doctors would use to describe setting a broken bone. Once again, we see a picture of power under control.

How meek are we? In the next lesson we will explore further how we may cultivate meekness in our lives.

## Matthew 5

### The Sermon on the Mount

5 Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him.

### The Beatitudes

2 And He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you on My account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

### Salt and Light

13 "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

### Memory Verse for the Week

"So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be quick to hear,  
slow to speak, slow to anger;"  
*(James 1:19)*