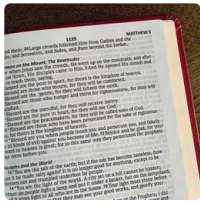


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Blessed Are The Meek



The Beatitudes - Steve Gregg

In this talk by Steve Gregg, he discusses the third beatitude from Matthew 5:5, which states "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Gregg explains that this beatitude is a restatement of an Old Testament verse in Psalm 37:11, which also states that the meek will inherit the earth. He emphasizes that meekness is not weakness or passivity, but rather a spirit of resignation to God's will and a willingness to defer to others. Gregg uses various scripture passages to illustrate how meekness is a characteristic of Christ and how it relates to spiritual and material leadership.

Transcript

The Beatitude we're going to talk about tonight is the third one, which is found in verse 5. Blessed are the meek, they shall inherit the earth. Now, this is a very good example of how Jesus' teaching really introduced nothing terribly new. Even in the Sermon on the Mount later on, where Jesus says, You have heard that it was said to them of old time, and then he quotes something from the law, and then he says, But I say unto you, and he gives something that's a little new to their ears.

It may be new to their ears, but it's not new at all, because everything Jesus said in those passages was also found in the Old Testament. Jesus was not replacing the ethics of the Old Testament with a new ethic. There was absolutely nothing wrong with the ethics of the Old Testament, except that no one lived up to them.

The ethics of the Old Testament were holy. The law is holy, just, and good, Paul said. The problem is me.

I don't live up to it. Jesus did introduce something different, and that was a work in the heart of the believer that changes him fundamentally so that those ethics of the Old Testament become a reality. Each of these Beatitudes describe a quality that is also advocated in the Old Testament.

In fact, none of the Beatitudes are so clearly simply a restatement of an Old Testament verse as is this one, because in the Psalms, in Psalm 37 and verse 11, it says, But the meek shall inherit the earth. Now, you couldn't come much closer to the wording of this

Beatitude without quoting it verbatim. There is the affirmation in the Old Testament that the meek shall inherit the earth, and therefore Jesus quite reasonably says, Blessed are you, meek.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. However, meekness is a quality that needs some exploration, because I think in our own minds, a person who is meek is sometimes viewed as a person who is sort of a milquetoast kind of character, doesn't have any backbone. We would even suggest it is a quality suggesting character weakness.

But in the Scripture, meekness is the opposite. It is a quality of strength, as we shall see. It is a quality of spiritual strength.

We need to discuss and explore what the Bible means by meekness and how it is we become meek if we're not already there. But there's another part to the Beatitude, and that's the second part, as all the Beatitudes have two parts. The second part of this Beatitude is, For they shall inherit the earth.

I'd like to discuss that first, because I want to spend more time talking about meekness than this second part. But this second part certainly ought to be considered, especially insofar as it seems to go across the grain of what many of us envisage as our eternal future. Most people that I talk to are Christians, assume that they are going to not only go to heaven, but live forever in heaven.

The Bible does not say anywhere that we're going to live forever in heaven. It does say we'll live forever. It does say we will be with God, that we'll be with Jesus forever.

But nowhere in the scripture does it tell us that the location of that eternal existence will be in heaven. The Bible indicates that when we die, if I understand correctly, there are some Christians who disagree with this particular doctrine, but I understand the scripture to teach that when we die, our spirits depart from our bodies and go to heaven, if we're Christians. And there we are with the Lord until the day of the resurrection.

That is, when Jesus returns, when Jesus returns, we don't remain in heaven because Jesus doesn't remain in heaven. Paul said, or actually, Peter said in his second sermon in Acts chapter three, he said of Jesus, whom the heavens must receive until the time of the restoration of all things. That is, Jesus has gone to heaven.

He's at the right hand of God. And the Bible says the heavens will retain him there until such a time as he will not be retained there anymore. Till the time of the restoration of all things.

And then what's he going to do? He's not going to stay there. He's going to come here. In Hebrews, it says to those who look for him, he shall appear a second time from heaven.

In Philippians chapter three, we are told that Jesus has gone into heaven from which we look for him to come again. Now, he is in heaven now, and so are those who have died in Christ. So shall we be if we die in Christ before the second coming, as I understand the scriptures.

But we will not stay there any longer than he will. He's coming back here. And what he's coming back to do is to reclaim the earth as his own.

In Revelation, we read in chapters 21, 22, that there is a new heaven and a new earth. Many people have wondered what do we need resurrection bodies for? I mean, if I go to heaven when I die and my spirit is in the presence of God, hey, isn't that good enough? Why bother with the resurrection later on? Well, if I was going to live in the spiritual realm disembodied for all eternity and in heaven, that would be a sensible question to ask. But God does not intend that we live eternally disembodied.

God never made man in the first place to live eternally disembodied. He made man, if man had not sinned, to live in a physical body. The very body he created Adam and Eve in could have lived forever in the garden and would have pleased God well had they not sinned.

And when Jesus returns, he is going to restore that which was lost in the fall. In fact, the description of the new heaven, the new earth and the new Jerusalem in Revelation 22 specifies certain details that remind us of the Garden of Eden. And it says in verse three of chapter 22 of Revelation, and there will be no more curse.

In other words, all that was lost in the curse in Genesis three will be restored back to the way God wanted it in the first place. How is that? Well, that was a physical earth. There was a heaven in Genesis one one in the beginning.

God created the heavens and the earth in Revelation. There's a new heavens and new earth. And where is the new Jerusalem? Well, the new Jerusalem comes down out of heaven, out of the new heaven, presumably to the new earth.

Why not? Jesus said the meek will inherit the earth. He is certainly going to inherit the earth. The Bible makes that clear enough.

If you look at Psalm chapter two, which is one of four great messianic kingdom psalms out of the in the Psalter, there are four psalms that have always been recognized as what most scholars would call kingdom psalms because they describe the kingdom of the Messiah. Those who are premillennial believe this refers to the future millennium when Jesus comes back and establishes his kingdom. Those who are not premillennial, like myself, believe that the kingdom was established by Christ at his first coming.

And it refers to the age of that we are now in the age during which Christ reigns in the hearts of his believers from heaven at the right hand of God. But whichever way we take

it, there are these four psalms that describe that kingdom of the Messiah. Psalm two is the only one of them we'll look at tonight.

But if you're curious to know the others, they are Psalm 45, Psalm 72 and Psalm 110. And these psalms are quoted a fair bit in the New Testament at Psalm two, Psalm 45, Psalm 72 and Psalm 110. Of those four, only Psalm 72, I think, avoids being quoted in the New Testament.

But Psalm 110 is the chapter of the Old Testament that is most frequently quoted in the New Testament. More than any other chapter in the Old Testament is quoted in the New Testament. Psalm two is also frequently quoted in the epistles and in the book of Acts.

In fact, Jesus, I believe, quoted from two. But in this psalm, we have the nations expressing their rebellion against God and against his anointed. The word anointed is Messiah.

And so they're rebelling against God and against Christ. However, God is not impressed. He's rather amused.

It says God shall sit in the heavens and laugh at them. In verse four, and then he'll have them in derision. He'll deride them.

And he says to them, to the nations of verse seven, I will declare the decree. I'm sorry. In verse six, he says, yet I have set my king on my holy hill of Zion.

In the first instance, this could refer to David and the opposition he received. And yet, notwithstanding the opposition, God managed to seat David as his king on the holy hill of Zion. But certainly the New Testament picks up this song.

And if it applied to David at all, it was only as a type of the Messiah, because the New Testament continuously uses this as a reference to Christ, who is seated at the right hand of God. Now, having said that, the Messiah himself speaks in verses seven and eight. And he says, I will declare the decree.

The Lord has said to me, you are my son. Today I have begotten you. Ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the ends of the earth for your possession.

God has promised to Jesus that if Jesus will only ask, which I'm sure that's what he's doing. He's interceding right now at the right hand of God. That upon asking, Jesus will receive as his inheritance the heathen, that is, the Gentile land and the ends of the earth as his possession.

Interestingly, the King James Version translates it at the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession. And there's a New Testament verse that uses that same expression. That's in Acts chapter one and verse eight, where Jesus says, you shall be my witnesses

in Jerusalem and in Judea and in Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

You'll be my witnesses. What with what message? But Jesus is the king. It's the message of the kingdom.

Jesus is Lord. And thus, through the carrying of the message of the kingdom to all the ends of the earth, Jesus eventually is going to inherit. Possess the ends of the earth, the uttermost parts of the earth, and that he then will be his possession.

So quite clearly, his inheritance is said to be the whole world. Jesus is going to inherit the whole world. In Romans chapter four, we have what's, you know, to someone who's an Old Testament reader, a strange statement, because Paul refers to the Old Testament character Abraham.

And makes a comment as if it is a given about Abraham. And yet we can't think of anything in the Old Testament that said this about Abraham. But he kind of states it as if everyone would agree with this about him.

In Romans chapter four and verse 13, Paul said for the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Now, Paul is really making a statement here about the dichotomy between law and faith. He takes for granted that everyone will agree that there was a promise made to Abraham and to his seed that he'd be the heir of the world.

Well, if you read the story of Abraham in Genesis, there's no reference to God promised him he'd be the heir of the world. There's reference to his seed inheriting the land of Canaan. But there's nothing there about the heir of the world.

But you see where Paul's coming from is this Abraham and his seed in Paul's thinking. Does anyone know who Abraham's seed is? Christ is Abraham's seed. That's what Paul says in Galatians 3 16.

He says the promises were made to Abraham and to his seed, not to seeds plural, but to his seed, which is Christ. Paul says Galatians 3 16. So Paul teaches elsewhere that Abraham and his seed is really reference to Abraham and Christ.

And now he speaks of Abraham and his seed, which we know to Paul means Abraham and Christ, and that there's the promise of the Old Testament that Abraham and his seed, Christ, would inherit the world. Well, there's no statement in Genesis in the story of Abraham that Abraham would inherit the world. But we do have throughout the Old Testament, including the psalm we just read, that the Messiah, Abraham's seed, would inherit the world.

After all, when Abraham was first called to leave her of the Chaldees, and we read of this in Genesis 12 verses one through three, God said, leave your homeland, your country,

your father's house, and I will make you a great nation. I'll make you a blessing to all nations in you. All the nations of the world will be blessed.

That, in a sense, was a prediction of Christ, because it is through Christ that all the nations of the world are blessed through Abraham's seed. And therefore, even there, there was an allusion to what would eventually be fulfilled through Christ. All the nations would be blessed.

But how? Through hearing about Christ. And only those who receive him would really be blessed. The rest would be cursed who hear of him and don't receive him.

So really, the blessing of Abraham to all nations is, in a sense, the same thing as the promise that Christ will inherit all nations. And the nations would be blessed by his having inherited them. We are among those that he has inherited out of all nations.

And we've been blessed. That's the blessing of Abraham. But Paul's theology is rather sometimes difficult to figure out.

But basically, he is saying that Abraham and his seed, Christ, were promised that they would be heir of the world. Well, that agrees well enough with the Old Testament teaching. And in the New Testament teaching, in Revelation chapter 11, this declaration occurs with the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

In verse 15, then the seventh angel sounded and there were loud voices in heaven saying, The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever. Notice there's no reference to reigning for a thousand years, only forever. And this is allegedly when Jesus returns.

When he returns, the kingdoms of the world will have become his kingdom. That means he inherits those kingdoms. He inherits the whole world, the nations.

And he will reign over them forever and ever. Now, whatever is true of Christ in this respect is true of us. Because Paul says in Romans chapter 8 that we are children of God, and if children were heirs of God.

In Romans 8, 16 and 17, Paul said the spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if we're children, then we're heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. If indeed we suffer with him, that we also may be glorified together.

Notice we are heirs of God, just as Christ is. In fact, we're joint heirs with Christ. And the term joint heir means one who jointly inherits.

What is Christ going to inherit? All nations. The whole world is his inheritance. What is ours then? Well, we're joint heirs with him.

Thus, we read also in the Old Testament, in one of the most, probably the second most

frequently quoted chapter in the Old Testament. I should say the second most quoted Old Testament chapter, quoted in the New Testament. Isaiah 53.

I think most Christians are familiar with some of the more, the more graphic verses here about Christ's sufferings. But I don't know if it's quite as familiar to read of the very end of the chapter, which says, Therefore, I, this is God the Father speaking, will divide him, that is Christ, a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong. Jesus, God will give Jesus his portion, his inheritance.

And Jesus will divide it with the strong. Who are the strong? Well, they happen to be the same people as he refers to as the meek here. Because Jesus said, the meek shall inherit the earth.

So did the Old Testament say that. We'll see more about how those two terms really agree with each other. In Revelation chapter 21 and verse 7, Jesus said, he that overcomes will inherit all things.

So we read throughout Scripture that Jesus will inherit this world forever. He'll reign in this world forever. It'll be the new earth, it'll be a renewed earth, but it'll be his domain nonetheless.

We will reign with him. We will inherit with him all things. We are joint heirs with him.

Now, that's when Jesus says, the meek shall inherit the earth. All he's saying is Christians will inherit the earth. Why? Because their Lord is going to inherit the earth and they're going to reign with him.

They're going to inherit what he inherits. And inheriting suggests two things in particular. Biblically, inheriting the earth suggests permanent occupation.

Just as God told the Jews they would inherit the land of Canaan, conditionally. It suggested that if they met the conditions, they would perpetually inhabit the land of Canaan. It would be their home.

Likewise, the Scripture teaches that the earth will be perpetually inhabited by the righteous. In Psalm 37, which is the same psalm that says, the meek shall inherit the earth, several verses earlier, in verse 3, it says, Trust in the Lord and do good, and dwell in the land, and feed on his faithfulness. Dwell in the land.

The word land there, Eretz in the Hebrew, also is the only word in the Hebrew language for earth. The word Eretz is ultimately translated earth or land, depending on a translator's whim in some cases, and sometimes on context, but often it's mere whim. This can be translated as earth, just as the same word is translated earth in verse 11, where it says the meek shall inherit the earth, same word, Eretz.

But it says in verse 3, Trust in the Lord and do good, dwell in the earth, and feed on his faithfulness. There are many places that we read of the righteous inheriting the earth, and dwelling in the earth, and staying in the earth. One of those places in Proverbs chapter 2, and the last two verses of that chapter, Proverbs 2, 21, and 22, says, For the upright will dwell in the land, or the earth, and the blameless will remain in it.

But the wicked will be cut off from the earth, and the unfaithful will be uprooted from it. Is that what your eschatology taught you? That the wicked will be uprooted from the earth, and the righteous will remain in it? Is that what you were taught in eschatology? I was actually taught the opposite, that we're going out of here, we're going to heaven, and we'll leave the wicked behind in the earth. That is not what the Bible teaches anywhere.

And so, the righteous will inherit the earth, the righteous will remain in it, the wicked will be uprooted from it. Let me show you that in a passage that probably, there's a good chance you may have had another way of looking at it before. In Matthew 24, in Matthew 24, in verse 38, or verse 37 and following, But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away. So also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two men will be in the field, one will be taken, and the other left.

Two women will be grinding at the mill, one will be taken, and the other left. Now, I was taught that these two people, one of whom was taken, the other left, that the one was taken, was taken into heaven, that that was the rapture. And the other was left here to go through the tribulation.

Certainly, there's nothing in the scripture that says that. That's just the way I read into it. However, if you look carefully at it, obviously, the opposite is true.

Because Jesus is likening this to the ark and the flood. And he says, in verse 39, And they did not know, that is, the wicked did not know until the flood came and took them all away. So it will be in the coming of the Son of Man.

Two men will be in one place, one will be taken. Just like the flood came and took them away in the days of Noah, so something will take them away when Jesus returns. Not rapture them, they'll die.

Now, if you wonder whether that is really the correct interpretation, we can look at the parallel in Luke, and that's about the best we can do to try to understand what Jesus was saying here. The parallel in Luke is, however, even clearer. Well, it seems clearer to me.

In Luke 21, I'm sorry, Luke 17, that's the parallel. Luke 21 parallels some of Matthew 24,

but Luke 17 parallels the rest. Luke 17, beginning at verse 34.

Jesus said, I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed, one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together, the one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field, one will be taken and the other left.

And the disciples answered and said to him, Where, Lord? So he said to them, Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together. Well, what is that about? He had just said that there will be persons in these various conditions, and there will be one taken and the other left, and one taken and the other left, one taken and the other left. And the disciples said, Where? Where what? Where will they be taken? These people that you're talking about being taken, where are they going? What's happening to them? Where, Lord? He said, Oh, there will be vultures, there will be eagles, wherever there's carcasses, there's eagles.

That's what he says. If you really want to find them, they won't be hard to find. Look for the circling vultures.

Now, how do you understand that statement of Jesus, if not that way? He said, One will be taken, one will be left. They said, Where? And he said, Wherever the bodies are. Wherever there's a body, there's a vulture, there's eagles.

Now, this agrees completely with everything in the scripture on the subject. In Matthew 13, which we won't turn to at this time, but you could later, we have the story of the wheat and the tares. And the wheat and the tares are the children of the kingdom, the children of the devil growing together until the end of the age.

And at the end of the age, Jesus said, He will send his angels out and they will get in the story. They gather the tares first. And then they gather the wheat into the barn.

When Jesus explains, he says, In the end of the age, he will send out his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all things that offend. And then the righteous shall shine forth in the kingdom of their father. Where's that? Well, what do we pray? Where do we pray for it to be? Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done where? On earth, as it is in heaven. Why should we pray for such a thing if that's not really where it's going to be? Jesus said it's part of our regular prayers. When you pray, pray this way.

Pray, Thy kingdom come. Where? From where to where? From there to here. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

This, if it seems strange to our modern eschatology, it certainly does not seem strange in light of the thorough going teaching of the Old Testament, which, of course, the disciples were already bathed in, and Jesus too. Jesus didn't change it, by the way. In Psalm

chapter 91, this business of one being taken and the other left, one being taken and the other left, and the one that's taken is the one who's killed in the judgment of God.

The one that's left is the believer who remains in the land. The righteous remain in the land. The wicked shall be rooted out of it, said Proverbs 2. What does Psalm 91 say? Psalm 91 says, in verse 7 and 8, Now, doesn't that sound like there's two in close proximity and one is taken and the other left? A thousand are falling at your side, at your right hand.

Ten thousand are falling, but it's not touching you. Why? Because you've made your home under the shadow of the Almighty, and no evil will befall you in the day of judgment. Now, that's a lot to start with, a lecture this long, to drop that kind of a bomb right at the beginning.

But the fact of the matter is, Christians are not, as often as I would expect them to be, taught what the Bible teaches on this, or what Jesus taught. The meek will inherit the earth. We will reign over the earth with Christ.

We will dwell in it. The kingdom is coming here. And when it is here, the will of God will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

It already is in heaven. It isn't already in earth. Now, to inherit the earth suggests not only that we will dwell there, but that we will reign there.

That's what Christ is going to do. And in Matthew 25, 34, where Jesus speaks to the sheep, when he's talking about the sheep and the goats, and on the day of judgment, he's sitting on the judgment throne, and he speaks to the sheep. He says, come ye blessed, my father, and enter into the kingdom that has been prepared for you since the foundation of the world.

They inherit the kingdom. It's on earth, because Jesus comes here. He doesn't set it up up there.

He comes here. He says, when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, then he shall sit on the throne of his glory, and he'll call the nations before him. This is what the parable begins with.

And the children of the kingdom inherit the kingdom that's prepared for them from the foundation of the world. And that kingdom means it's just like Solomon inherited a kingdom. His father, David, was a king, and when David died, he left the kingdom to his son, Solomon.

He inherited the kingdom. The Bible says we're going to inherit a kingdom. In fact, the expression inheriting the kingdom is a couple of times used in the New Testament only to show who won't inherit the kingdom.

In 1 Corinthians 6:9, Paul said, Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. He starts by saying, Do you not know this? Unfortunately, a lot of Christians, they don't seem to know that because they think there's going to be people going to heaven or people who are living with them and eternity with Jesus who are living in fornication, unrepentant in this life.

Paul didn't seem to know that he was surprised. He was surprised that any of the Corinthians might have thought otherwise. In Galatians 5, when Paul lists a long list of things that are called the works of the flesh.

At the end of the list, the list begins in verse 19, Galatians 5:19 and closes in verse 21. It's a long list. We won't read it.

But the last line in verse 21 says, I've told you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Now, the meek shall inherit the kingdom of God. The meek shall inherit the earth, but the wicked will not.

And it doesn't matter even if they're wicked who go to church and profess to be Christians. If they fit that description, they will not inherit the kingdom of God. In Revelation 5:10, we read of the celebration of those who are in heaven because they have died and they're in heaven awaiting the second coming of Christ, which is where we'll be if we die before the second coming of Christ.

And of them, it says that they sing a song. And part of that song is found in Revelation 5:9 and 10. I read verse 9 and 10.

They said this song. You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals for you were slain and you've redeemed us to God by your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation. That's got to be the church and have made us kings and priests to our God.

And we shall reign on the earth. We from every nation, kindred and tongue will reign on the earth. That's what we're.

That's where the kingdom is. We will inherit the kingdom. That kingdom is honor.

Of course, they were in heaven when they sang this song because he saw this vision before the second coming of Christ. But that we should. Now, if you have a modern translation that uses different manuscripts instead of we and us, it'll say they and them and men.

But it's still talking about the same group. Still talking with the church. And having said

that, we can go on and talk about that qualification.

Meekness. What is it to be meek? Well, I'd like to begin by calling your attention to the material on the back of the notes. This comes from certain lexical aids.

The word process and its cognates are the words that are translated meek in the King James Version and in the in the verse we're considering. Bless are the meek. Spiro Zodiates writes this about that word.

He says, Proctes, according to Aristotle. Now, this will, of course, reflect the classical Greek outside the scripture. And when when the disciples wrote the New Testament in Greek, they used, of course, the meanings of words that were current in the classical Greek, or at least in the Konya Greek of the time.

Proctes, according to Aristotle, is the middle course in being angry. Standing between two extremes, getting angry without reason and not getting angry at all. Therefore, Proctes is getting angry at the right time, in the right measure and for the right reason.

Now, you might have never thought meekness means getting angry. But it means not getting angry as much as it means getting angry. In Aristotle's understanding of the word, and he was fairly fluent in his own language, Greek, he understood meekness to mean something halfway between getting angry unjustifiably and not getting angry when you should get angry.

There are times, you know, when you should be angry. Jesus got angry. He was not an angry man, but he got angry on occasion.

The Bible speaks of it. And we're even told in Ephesians, be angry and do not sin, which means there must be some kind of anger that is not sin. Unfortunately, most anger we have is sin.

And that's because we do not we're not meek. Meekness would be getting angry only at the right time, in the right measure and for the right reason. I suspect most of the time when we get angry, we get angry, not for the right reason, not at the right time and not in the right measure.

And the reasons Jesus got angry was, for example, when when people were defiling the temple or when the Pharisees were misrepresenting God and he got angry at them. The Bible says he got angry at them in Mark 3. It says he looked on them with anger. So Jesus got angry, but not at the people who were hurting him.

That's the difference between him and us. We get angry at the people who hurt us. He got angry.

He didn't know. He didn't even get angry at the people who hurt him. He just said,

Father, forgive them.

They don't know if they do. He didn't. He was not angry at those who hurt him, but he was angry at those who abused the name of God and misrepresented God.

And where the Jewish leaders who defiled the temple and so forth. Jesus was meek. He described himself as such in Matthew 11, 29.

He said, I'm gentle and meek. And he is now the word when it's used in the New Testament has a slightly more spiritual meaning. It would seem in trenches commentary.

He said that Pratt is or meekness is the temper of spirit in which we accept God's dealings with us as good and therefore without disputing or resisting. It is closely linked to the word humility. It is only the humble heart, which is also the meek.

This meekness being, first of all, a meekness before God is also such in the face of men, even evil men, out of a sense that these with the insults and injuries which they may inflict are permitted and employed by him for the chastening and purifying of his elect. In other words, meekness is sort of a resignation to the will of God, which causes the person who is meek to be meek, not only before the dealings directly of God, but also the dealings of God through people, even people who injure and who insult because of the sovereignty of God. The believer can accept from the hand of God, even abuse from other people and do so in a spirit of meekness.

We'll see scriptures on this in a minute, but I want to read whether one other lexical definition. This comes from Hogg and Vine in their commentary on Galatians. They wrote, it is difficult to find a rendering for Pratt is less open to objection than meekness.

Gentleness has been suggested. Now, interrupt a moment here to say that in many of the new translations, you won't find the word meek in the scriptures we're going to look at tonight. The word meek is found in the King James Version and it's the appropriate translation.

But many new translations have exchanged the word gentleness for meekness and gentle for me. Even the new King James does in some of the passages. And that is because there are many scholars who feel that the word meek, you know, kind of describes a mealy mouth kind of a person.

And and they think it sort of depicts the wrong thing. But meekness is really a better word than gentleness for this word. Say Hogg and Vine.

This is the same Vine who wrote Vines Exposure Dictionary, W.E. Vine. They say it is hard to find a rendering of this word less open to objection than meekness. Gentleness has been suggested.

But as Pratt describes a condition of mind and heart and as gentleness is appropriate rather to actions. This word is no better described negatively. Meekness is the opposite of self assertiveness and self interest.

It is equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down simply because it is not occupied with itself at all. So there's some background information on what the word meek means, at least the Greek word that is used here. It is sort of the middle ground between never being angry and being angry at the wrong times.

It is, in other words, not quickly provoked. And it is also that disposition of spirit that receives from the hand of God all circumstances without disputes or complaints. It is therefore, in a sense, resignation and surrender to God.

That is the root of the spiritual root of being a meek person is that you have surrendered and resigned your life into the hands of God and you accept from him whatever he chooses to bring, even if it is through malicious persons. And then, as Vine says, it really is kind of self forgetfulness, not thinking about oneself at all, not elated and not cast down, not self assertive or self concerned. This is what meekness is like.

Now, I'd like to look at scriptures. We just looked at lexicons, but I'd like to look at actual scriptures because sometimes when you read the lexicons and their definitions of words, probably most of you have never cracked a lexicon. But some of you are those kind of egghead types like me that like to read lexicons.

And you sometimes get the impression these scholars are mixed a lot of their own theology and a lot of their own assumptions in there. And I'd like to just see how does the Bible use the word and see how much of it is really biblically based and how much of it is kind of their own additions. Frankly, I don't disagree with anything in those quotes I gave you.

I'm not a Greek scholar. Who am I to disagree with Trench and Vine and Zodiatis? But but at the same time, I feel the scriptures are more authoritative even than the scholars. And so I'd like for us to look at what the scripture teaches about meekness.

One of the things that Vine said was it is the opposite of self assertiveness. That certainly seems to be biblically true. In Matthew chapter twenty one, we have Jesus in his triumphal entry on Palm Sunday.

And this fulfilled a prophecy of Zechariah Zechariah nine nine, which is here quoted by Matthew. In Matthew twenty one, verses four and five, Matthew says, all this was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the prophet saying, tell the daughter of Zion. Behold, your king is coming to you lowly and sitting on a donkey, a colt and the foal of a donkey.

Now, that word lowly. Is the word practice meekness. Or meek, really, it's it's prayos,

which is the.

Adjectival form of the noun meekness, it's it's the same word that we translated meek in many other places. Translators don't always translate it the same way, but it's the same word Jesus used. We said blessed are the meek.

Those who are like him. Well, what was he like? He inherited the kingdom. In fact, he wrote in Jerusalem as the king.

But he didn't come in, as most kings do with armies and swords, you know, to conquer the place on a white charge. He came in lowly, meekly on a donkey, not even a donkey, but a donkey's fall on a colt. He obviously was not there to make war.

He was not riding a war horse. He was not there to assert his dominion against the wills of the public. He obviously presented himself, but he did not assert himself in the sense of forcing his kingship on an unwilling.

Subjects in James chapter three, by the way, in the notes I've given you, those references that are in boldface. There's an asterisk there to tell you this. Those are the the references that actually use the Greek words for meek or meekness.

Some of these other references don't use the word meek, but simply describe the characteristics of a meek person without using the same word. In James chapter three and verse 17, James said that the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield. Full of mercy and good fruits without partiality and without hypocrisy.

Now, a great number of those terms are taken right from the Beatitudes. I've told you before that James, more than any other epistle, draws from the Sermon on the Mount and rehashes it and represents from the Sermon on the Mount. Over 20 different allusions to the Sermon on the Mount we found in the book of James.

And in this one verse alone, there's quite a bit of the Beatitudes. Pure, blessed are the pure in heart, peaceable, blessed are the peacemakers, full of mercy, blessed are the merciful. Now, willing to yield, gentle and willing to yield.

I dare say that those are the characteristics of the meek, not self-assertive, willing to defer, willing to yield to somebody else's wishes, not demanding that they get their way, even if they have as much right to it as the other party has. The meek person does not assert his rights. He's willing to yield.

We have an example of this in Abraham in Genesis 13. You may turn there if you'd like to. I'm not going to bother to take too long.

But in Genesis 13, there is the story of how Lot and his herdsmen began to dispute with

Abram and his herdsmen because there was they both had such large herds and they were in a constricted area and there was dispute over the pasture land. So Abraham approached Lot and said, listen, let there be no disputes between you and me and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen because we're brethren. He said, how about we just stand here, we kind of make a mental divide of the whole property.

There's a line down the middle. You can go to the right if you like, and I'll let you have it without dispute. Or you can go to the left if you like, and I'll let you have that.

I'll just take whatever you leave. Now, there is meekness for you. Because all the land was Abraham's.

None of it was Lot's. He didn't owe Lot any of it. Lot was just there as his nephew who he had adopted because he'd become an orphan.

And God had promised all the land to Abraham. He hadn't promised one bit of it to Lot. As it turned out, Lot didn't inherit any of it in the end.

But Abraham knew that the land was his, but in order to keep peace in the family, he said, I'll tell you what. I'll give up my rights here. I could just send you back to Haran, where we've got relatives, or even back to Ur of the Chaldees.

But that'd be hard on you. I'll just let you take half the land. Just pick which half you want, and I'll take the other half.

That's not self-assertive. That's meekness. That's willing to yield to the other person.

And it's a very good example because many times Christians have problems with other Christians for the simple reason that they both have about equal right to have their way. But they can't both get their way because the particular thing they want. They sleep in the same bedroom, and one person wants the windows closed, and the other wants the windows open when they sleep.

Can't both get it their way. The meek person yields to the other person. Is that weakness? Well, we shall see biblically it is not weakness.

It is, in fact, a strength. In addition to being non-assertive and deferring to others, meekness is a characteristic of persons who are, it is shown in being non-defensive and resigned to God's will. We saw that in one of the lexical quotes on the back of the sheet, that someone who's resigned to the will of God.

They accept all things from God without disputing or complaining about it, and therefore they're not defensive. Jesus described this without using the word meek, but I believe that in Matthew 5, when he gave this teaching, he was expounding on the beatitude. Blessed are the meek.

You'll find that virtually all the beatitudes are expounded on in the rest of the Sermon on the Mount. They are the introductory preface, and the rest of the sermon basically unpacks them and expounds on them. In the verses in Matthew 5 and verse 38 and following, I believe we have a picture here of what it means to be meek.

Jesus said, You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile with him, go two with him. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you, do not turn away.

He says, You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends his rain on the just and the unjust.

Now, this is a picture of non-defensiveness. Someone strikes you, someone sues you, someone wrongs you. And instead of retaliating, even defending yourself, you absorb it.

You absorb the injury. In 1 Peter 4, 19, Peter said, Therefore, let those who suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls unto him in well-doing as unto a faithful creator. What's that mean? If you're suffering and it's God's will for you to suffer, which that's what he's assuming his readers will understand, that when they are suffering, God must be allowing this.

Then what are you to do? Resign yourself to God. Commit yourself into his hands as unto a faithful creator by continuing to do the right thing, even if that's the thing you're suffering for. Meekness is not protecting oneself, not defensive.

James chapter 5 and verse 6 is a rebuke to the rich who have been exploiting the poor. And he says to them, You have condemned, you have killed the just or the righteous. And it says this, And he does not resist you.

These people are condemning in court and killing righteous people. And what were the righteous doing in response? Not resisting. If you have the NIV, they botched this one pretty good because they did.

The translators, I think, couldn't stomach the idea that righteous people, when being condemned and killed, would not resist. And so they've changed it. They changed the whole tense from the Greek.

They just let the Greek be as though it didn't exist and made the verse say what they

wanted it to say. And if you have one, you'll see that it says, You have condemned, you've killed the righteous, and he was not opposing you. So that what they have the verse say is that the one who's being condemned and killed was innocent.

He had done nothing to provoke this. He was not opposing you. However, that's past tense.

In the Greek, it's present tense. He does not resist you. And so every translation except the NIV reads about the same way.

NIV translators didn't want to be blamed with telling people they're not supposed to resist. So this is a quality of meekness and a very closely related quality of meekness is non retaliation. Obviously, if you're not defending yourself in the first place, you're not going to retaliate.

You're not going to try to get back at people who've done you wrong. And we already read Matthew 5, 44. Jesus said, Love your enemy.

Bless those who curse you. Do good to those who spitefully use you. Don't do evil to them.

Do good to them. Likewise, throughout the New Testament, we have that teaching. In first Peter, chapter two and verse 23, we have the example of Christ, the meek.

And he says of Christ, who when he was reviled, he did not revile in return. When he suffered, he did not threaten. But he committed himself to him who judges righteously.

The very thing that Peter says we should do in first Peter 4, 19, when we're suffering according to the will of God, commit yourself to him. Resign yourself to him. That's what Jesus did.

He resigned himself into the hands of God. That's what meekness is. Accepting ill treatment from man or from circumstances from the hand of God.

Now, does this mean that we have to walk into trouble and look for trouble upon ourselves? And that we can't even run away from trouble? We can do all those. We can run away from trouble. Jesus said to his disciples, when they persecute you in one city, flee to the next.

But retaliation to those who hurt you is out of the question. And in many cases, even resistance cannot be done without compromise. There are times when you can walk away from an insult.

You can walk away from a fight and avoid getting the second cheek struck, too. But when you can't, rather than fight back, rather than protect, it is more like Christ, whom we are to imitate, that we simply absorb further injury and commit ourselves into the

hands of God. Certainly, that's taught by Paul, as we've seen it taught by Jesus and by Peter.

We find it in Paul also in Romans 12. Romans 12, verses 17 through 21, Paul said, Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, no retaliation, but rather give place to wrath, that means God's wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord. Therefore, if your enemy hungers, feed him.

If he thirsts, give him a drink. For in so doing, you'll heap coals of fire upon his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

If somebody does something malicious to you, you are being attacked by evil. Don't be overcome by evil. How do you overcome evil? If you retaliate in kind.

You've just got, you've picked up that spirit. That same spirit has just conquered you. You've been overcome by evil, but you can overcome evil by doing good to those who are doing evil to you.

That's what Jesus did. That's what Jesus taught. That's what the disciples taught.

That is meekness. Another aspect of meekness is being teachable. Remember, meekness is associated with humility and a meek person is willing to hear an opposing viewpoint and consider it and maybe even admit he was wrong.

It's important to be teachable. That is a part of meekness. We see that in a number of places.

In Psalm 25 and verse nine, it says the humble. He guides in justice. The humble.

He teaches his way. That word humble is the word meek. King James says me.

New King James is humble. Those who are humble and teachable. Those who are meek.

Will receive teaching from God. God will teach and guide those who are, in fact, teachable, which is an aspect of meekness. In Proverbs chapter 24, in fact, in many places in Proverbs, we have reference to being teachable and receiving correction and so forth.

How that is a mark of wisdom in Proverbs 24 and verse six, it says, for by wise counsel, you will wage your own war for in a multitude of counselors. There is safety. In other words, receive counsel as much as you can be teachable.

In James chapter one and verse 21, it's we are exhorted and hear the word meek is

actually used in the passage. It's not in some of the passages we look at, but this one actually uses the. The Greek word practice.

In James one twenty one. It says, therefore, lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. Receive the word with meekness, as with a teachable spirit.

A meek person is a teachable spirit. He doesn't have to insist that he's right, even if he thinks he is right. He knows he's not 100 percent right about everything.

Paul said, we know in part and none of us are an exception to that. And therefore, always willing to hear, willing to hear. A responsible presentation of of an alternative view, if it's especially if it's given from the word of God, is is a mark of being meek and one that we need to have now.

If we talk about being meek as being not defending oneself. Not retaliating, then what's going to happen to the meek person? I think if we walked all over, isn't that sort of the same thing as being a doormat? I've heard people say, if you don't stand up for yourself, no one else is going to stand up for you. Don't be a doormat.

You'll just get abused. You've got to stand up for your rights, et cetera, et cetera. Well, I don't fully agree with that.

I mean, it may be that if you are meek that you'll be walked all over. Jesus was. Jesus was meek and he got walked all over.

He didn't threaten. He just committed himself to God. Meek people sometimes do in terms of their earthly relationships, get abused.

However, it is not true that if you don't defend yourself, no one else will. In Isaiah, chapter 11 and verse four, this is a prophecy about Jesus. You can see that from verse one.

There shall come forth a rod from the stem of Jesse and a branch from his roots. It's a reference to Jesus and of him, it says in verse four. But with righteousness, he will judge the poor.

And in this, he means vindicate them, judge in their favor and decide with equity for the meek of the earth. The word meek, there is the same Hebrew word that's used in the psalm that says the meek shall inherit the earth. It's the same word Jesus is talking about.

Jesus will decide with equity on behalf of the meek of the earth. That means that Jesus ultimately will judge your case. Jesus will vindicate you.

That's why Paul said, give place to wrath. Don't avenge yourself. God says vengeance is

mine.

I will repay Jesus and his father are committed to the well-being of the meek. Now, in the verses that I have the rest of the notes, I can't we can't look at all these, but there are scriptures for all of them. In the scripture, meekness is said to be a mark of strength.

In Proverbs 16, 32, it says a man who can hold his temper is greater than a man who can conquer a city. And he that rules his spirit is greater than a warrior. In Romans 15, verse one, Paul said, you who are strong should bear with the weaknesses of the weak.

No, it's deferred to them and their weakness because you're strong. Meekness is a strength. It is a mark of spirituality.

In Galatians 6, one Paul said, if anyone is stumbled or is going out of the way, says you who are spiritual, restore such one in a spirit of meekness. The spiritual ones are the ones who can act in the spirit of meekness to restore those who are fallen. It is a mark of wisdom.

In James 3, 13. Speaks of the meekness of wisdom. It is a mark of leadership.

Moses in numbers 12 and verse 13 is said to be the meekest man who ever lived. He's also the greatest leader that ever lived in Old Testament times, as any historian would have to admit. And Jesus himself, a greater than Moses, is also said to be meek.

In Matthew 11, 29, Jesus said, I am gentle and meek and you shall find rest to your souls if you learn from me. There are quite a few traits in scripture that are associated with meekness. Lowliness of mind, which is humility, is listed alongside meekness three times in the scripture.

Patience and forbearance are listed with it twice. It is listed alongside the word gentleness in a couple of places and quietness in the case where Peter tells women to have the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Quietness, gentleness, patience, forbearance, lowliness of mind.

These are the traits that run in the same company with meekness. It's associated with them. These are the traits that we must put on in Colossians 3, 12.

Paul says, put on meekness. In first Timothy 6, 11, he tells Timothy, follow after meekness. Meekness doesn't come naturally.

It must be cultivated. We need to remember what it is that is meekness, according to scripture, because Jesus said we are required to be meek if we would inherit the kingdom and inherit the earth. So these are really the things that the Bible teaches about this beatitude.

The meek are not self-assertive, not defensive, not retaliating, teachable in their own

way. God esteems them as strong, spiritual, wise and leadership material. When you meet people who are not meek, they seem strong in the world's eyes.

And it's interesting that the conventionalism would be if anyone's going to inherit the world, it's going to be the strong. It's going to be the assertive. It's going to be the guy who's got the biggest armies and the biggest ego and the most aggressive agenda.

But Jesus says it may seem that way to conventional wisdom. But the fact is, it's the meek who will inherit the earth because Jesus will reprove on their behalf. Jesus will come and give it to them.

We don't have to win it through the means that the world tries to, men of the world try to gain the world. It will be given to the meek, said Jesus. And that is what this beatitude is there to tell us.