

Blessed Are the Meek

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer's sermon 'Blessed Are the Meek' explores the true meaning of meekness as a confident humility rooted in faith in God.

Duration: 31:21

Scripture: Psalm 37:1-11, Matthew 5:3-11

Topics: "Meekness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the Beatitudes in Matthew chapter 5, which describe the characteristics of a blessed life. He emphasizes that these qualities reflect conformity to the image of Christ. The preacher shares a powerful story about Hudson Taylor, a missionary who remained calm and faithful in the face of imminent danger, choosing to sing hymns to the Lord instead of fearing for his life. The sermon also highlights the importance of recognizing God's provision and blessings in our lives, and the significance of being a humble and obedient servant to our perfect Master.

Transcript

This sermon was uploaded by Grace Community Church in San Antonio, Texas, and our website is www.gccsatx.com, or you can find us on Sermon Audio by going to www.sermonaudio.com slash gcc. No one will call me for a parking lot anymore. Alright, in Matthew chapter 5, we have, in verse 3 on through 11, we have the Beatitudes blessed, to live a blessed life.

But what's really going on here is conformity to the image of Christ. This is a great description of who Christ truly was as He walked upon this earth. Now, some people have trouble with that because they go, well, you know, blessed are those who mourn, they shall be comforted.

Well, it's not simply, as in our case, mourning over our own sin, for Christ had no sin, but mourning over the fallen state of the things around Him. But I just want to go and touch on one thing that is so very important, that I think will be very helpful, is this verse 5. Blessed are the gentle. The word also is often translated meek.

Blessed are the gentle, or the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. When I hear preachers and people preach on this, I'm always hearing, you know, usually the same thing. Well, blessed are the meek.

That doesn't mean blessed are the weak. It doesn't mean that you allow people to step on you, or this or that, but that you're humble. And then maybe go to Moses, who was the meekest man on earth, and yet he was a great leader.

And those are things, possibly about meekness, but really not telling me, what does this mean? I mean, what does it really mean? Does it mean to be meek? What does that word mean? Does it mean to be just gentle, like a gentleman? I don't think gentle is a very good translation. I like the translation meek. And we're going to see why.

Now, how are we going to find out, as Bible students, what this means? Do we do a word study in Greek? Well, that would be very helpful. But you should understand that oftentimes a word, the meaning of it is determined not by going simply to a lexicon and looking up the meaning. But it's defined by its context.

Now, blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. After doing a study of the word meek, which means meek or gentle, then we should ask ourselves, well, is this found any other place in Scripture? Is there anything like this in any other place in Scripture? And fortunately, there is. Now, let's go to the book of Psalms.

Verse 37. Psalms 37. Now notice, then in our Matthew passage it says, Blessed are the meek, for they shall, what? Inherit the earth.

Now go to Psalms 37.11. But the humble will inherit the land, and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity. The humble will inherit the land. Now I want us to look at this passage.

And in the context of this passage, Psalms 37, we're going to understand what it means to be meek. And to experience the blessedness of meekness. Now, what does it mean to be a man who is meek? Look in verse 1. Do not fret because of evildoers.

Do not... Be not envious toward wrongdoers. Now remember what a Christian is. He is a man behind enemy lines, in a fallen world, surrounded by darkness, a world that is led by the prince of the power of the air, sons of disobedience, children of wrath, all around him.

So, he's going to have evildoers and wrongdoers all around him. One of the things that we'll notice about the meek man is he does not fret. He isn't running with panic because the political situation has gone strange for him.

Or he just received a message from some Christian internet or radio thing that Y2K is coming or something. He does not fret. And we're going to see why pretty soon.

He has a strong confidence in his God. He isn't oblivious to all the bad things that are going on. It's just all the bad things going on can't compare to the one who controls his life and the entire universe.

It's like fretting because a tiny little man who weighs 75 pounds soaking wet and can't even lift your shoe has walked in the door threatening you and yet standing beside you is a bodyguard that would make Arnold Schwarzenegger look like a wimp. He doesn't fret. Why? Because he has a view of who God is.

He has a view of the character of God. He has great confidence in that character. Do not fret because of evildoers.

Be not envious towards wrongdoers. Now, why is he saying that? Because even in the theme of Scripture we can see that it is quite frequent in this world that the wicked prosper. And many times the righteous who maybe do not prosper, the righteous look at the wicked and are envious of them.

But the meek man, he doesn't do that. He doesn't look at the wicked and envy them for their wealth. He doesn't look at men who have compromised spiritually for gain and envy them.

Even the psalmist, you know, got distracted there. He saw the wicked. He was envious of them.

He wanted to be like them until he went back to the temple and he saw God. You see, so this meek man, he doesn't worry or fret about all the things going on around him, even though all hell may be breaking loose and the very foundations of the world are shaking. And he doesn't envy wicked men for the same reason.

His strong confidence in God. He doesn't envy them because he knows what God has said about them and he knows if God has said it, it's true. He wouldn't trade places with them for all the money in the world.

Now, for he knows they will wither quickly like the grass and fade like the green herb. Now see, he can only know this. He can't know this by experience.

Now maybe there will be a few instances where a rich man will die or a powerful man will lose all his power. Maybe he'll see that every once in a while. But basically by experience, he doesn't know this.

He knows this because God said it. I mean, I don't see a lot of wicked men withering quickly nor fading like green herb. Now it happens, but he knows this because God told him it's true.

So this meek man is someone who knows God and has ultimate confidence in God and what God says. Now, trust in the Lord and do good. Now in the midst of all these men rejecting God, running away from God, hating God and doing evil, everyone's going this way.

This meek man is walking the opposite direction of everybody. He's walking toward God, toward God's will. Everyone else is rejecting God.

He's trusting in God. Everyone else is doing evil. He is trusting God and doing good.

He's almost like a man with blinders. And we're going to see how this really comes in to the picture. Years and years ago when I was a little boy, there was still a family in our town that did not use a car.

They used a horse and wagon. And they weren't Amish or Mennonite. That's what they did.

You could hear them coming right down our street because they didn't have any tires on the wagon. And so it was just rims. You'd hear it coming.

You know, half a mile down the road, you'd hear them coming. I believe their name was a McGee's. Alright, those horses had blinders on.

And they put blinders on horses. They don't look any place else except straight forward. This meek man is not distracted by all the things he sees to his right and all the things that he sees to the left, by everything he sees everybody else doing.

He's not distracted by bad news, the world's coming to an end. None of that. Why? He's got his eyes fixed upon God.

I mean, just there. You can't shake him. His eyes are looking right at God.

Now, not only that, he says, Trust in the Lord and do good. Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Cultivate faithfulness.

Now, what is he doing? There's a solidity to his life. He's going to dwell in the land and stay put. He's going to stay put right in the place where God has put him.

He's not going to run. He's not going to back up. Not necessarily going to go forward, unless it's at the command of God.

He's just going to dwell right where God has put him. So many times we're so quick and anxious to escape, to run from a certain thing. No, he's just going to stay put.

And in the midst of where he's at, he's going to cultivate faithfulness. Now, just realize this. What's everybody else cultivating? Evil? Wickedness? Sowing seeds of all sorts of things? What's he going to do? He's going to stay put.

He's not going to run and try to find a better neighborhood. He's not going to go join a Christian community somewhere in which he can run away from everybody and sit on a mountain and be in a commune. He's going to stay put right where he's at, in the will of God, and in the midst of everybody else maybe cultivating all sorts of things, he's going to cultivate faithfulness.

Do you see that? And again, there is a sense that he can stay put only because he's looking straight at God. He's looking straight at God. Now, let's go on.

Cultivating faithfulness. Do you sense there's an idea here of he's working, he's actively involved in producing something. He's actively involved.

He has a goal. He wants to be more and more faithful. So this meek man we're beginning to see has blinders on to everything and is looking straight at God with the utmost confidence.

And if God says stay, he stays. If God says go, he goes. If God says lift your foot, he lifts his foot.

Now, I don't know if any of you have ever hunted with beagle dogs, rabbit dogs, or bird dogs, but both of them can be quite energetic. It is not difficult to teach a rabbit dog to run. It's not difficult to teach a bird dog to run around all over the place like they had their head cut off.

What's difficult is to teach them to stay. Stop. Don't move.

And they stay there. They don't lift a foot. They don't twitch a muscle.

They stay until they're given another command to go. Do you see that? Now, one of the great problems, at least I experienced in my own life as a younger man and even until today, is you want to run around everywhere, but you don't get a whole lot done. And a lot of times younger ministers will actually look at older ministers and think they're lazy or they don't want to do anything.

But that older minister may accomplish 20 times, gain 20 times the accomplishment of a younger minister with a tenth of the effort. He's waiting upon the Lord. He's listening.

He's not frantically. Have you ever heard someone say, well, don't just stand there. Do something.

That's not biblical. Now, dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord.

What's a meek man? He delights himself in the Lord. Everybody needs a place of escape. A cleft in the rock.

Not just a cleft in the rock or a place to escape, but a place to be restored and renewed. Where is that? In Christ. In the Lord.

Let me share with you something. How you can know in the ministry that something has turned for the worse. When you say to yourself, man, I have just got to get away.

I've just got to get away from all this. I need to go hunt or fish or go play golf or just take some time away from all of this. But when you remove yourself from the ministry for those two weeks or whatever you need, you also remove yourself from Christ.

You don't read Scripture. You need a break. Now, just think about what you're saying for a moment.

I agree you need a break from ministry. But I do not agree you need a break from Christ. Because I can assure you, you get a break from ministry and take a break from Christ, you're going to come back just as bad if not worse.

You never take a break from Christ. Your strength comes from delighting in Him. From being with Him.

And if you ever do that, know this, that you've equated Christ and ministry. You've put the two and made them one and you've lost both of them. Okay? Don't do that.

That's why I was saying keep the relational aspect primary. Now, delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. This is not some morbid person who has decided, in the name of Jesus, in the name of meekness and faithfulness, I'm going to cut out all blessing and all hope of blessing in my life.

No. He's not just doing this because he's right or because he believes that one day there will be an eternal payment for it. He believes that God will give him the desires of his heart.

That God does give good things to His children. Carnal men can't understand that. They can't.

Sometimes the Lord will bless us with very little money, but the other blessings that He puts in the place of money will be so great that we would not trade places with the greatest billionaire on the planet. Or at other times, He will provide for us financially and economically, but we know it is from the Lord. The Lord will also look and give His children the desire of their heart.

One of the things that most astounds me is how God is not as spiritual as most of you. What do I mean? He cares about little things that we would almost consider to be trite. He looks into the heart of His children and He will give them the desires of their heart, and it's not necessarily something that will supposedly advance the kingdom.

Maybe I've shared with you this illustration before, but I remember one time years ago when Charo and I were serving in Peru, and I think that year I had made something like our entire support or something was like \$4,000 or something. I don't know what it was. \$5,000.

I mean, it was just pitiful. And we were going back to the States for a few months, and Charo said, and she never asked anything of me really. She said, when we go back to the States, could I get some country crafts and bring them back to the apartment? And I was like, well, what's that? And I found out they're like, you know, cut out little pigs with ribbons around their neck and stuff, chickens that they hang on the wall.

Country crafts, you know? Go to Gatlinburg. You'll know what I'm talking about. So we go visit my uncle near Gatlinburg, and we walked into a country crafts store.

And we walked in, stayed about five minutes, walked out, because those country crafts cost more than an actual pig. I mean, it was just, I said, you know, and Charo didn't say anything. She didn't mope or anything.

We just kind of laughed and walked out. Well, but she had mentioned this, I mean, weeks before. I mean, I guess it was something, you know, I don't really understand the female mind, but something she would really like to have, a few of those country crafts hanging in her whatever, kitchen or something.

Well, I went from there to West Tennessee to preach. We stayed with the pastor and his wife. And we walked in, he says, you'll be staying in something of a storeroom, but we made it into a bedroom.

And he says, forgive us, but we've just renovated the entire parsonage, and it's full of boxes and stuff. So we walked in, and the pastor's wife said, oh, Charo, there's two boxes. And they were about, I mean, they were large boxes.

He says, just the stuff that I'm just going to give away to Salvation Army or something, but if you want them, you can have them. My wife sat there and said, well, thank you very much. And the moment the lady shut the door, my wife jumped on those boxes like a wild cat.

When she opened them up, and both boxes were full of country crafts. Now I know that you would be too spiritual to be concerned with such things. I haven't done a lot of things in my life like fishing and hunting.

I just mainly talk about it. And a lot of times, I've been given opportunities from the Lord, and I've refused to take them wrongly. But I've been amazed.

You know, there are doctors. I have great respect for doctors. There are doctors.

They make a lot of money. They go, man, I'm going to save up and go on a hunt in Iowa because that's where the big bucks are. I went to Iowa a few months ago or a month ago or whatever, hunted for nothing.

God opened up the door and someone just let me go. Do you see what I'm saying? God is so well-rounded. He loves His children.

He gives them the desires of their heart and exactly when they need it. And He withholds such things when they don't need it. Here's the thing about slavery.

Slavery is a wonderful thing if you're a slave to a perfect master because do you realize that the master is in charge of what you're going to eat, what you're going to wear, protecting you, defending you,

everything. You're only in charge of one thing. Doing what the master says.

That really simplifies life, doesn't it? Most people are given to doing all the things to provide for themselves and then not doing the will of their master instead of setting themselves to doing the will of the master and the master taking care of their every need. So God will give us the desires of our heart. Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.

One thing that's very important here, notice this person isn't delighting himself in hunting or fishing or clothes or a car or anything else. He's delighting himself in the Lord. What is the desire of his heart? The Lord.

So one of the greatest benefits of that is the Lord's going to give him the Lord. A very wealthy man came to me one time and he was talking about the Lord had really worked in his life and he was going to do some serious adjustments. And I praise God for that.

I mean, he really did. And he said, you know, Brother Paul, this was years ago, I look at you and I just feel it just doesn't seem right and it just doesn't seem fair. He's going on and on about how he has so much and I had so little.

And that's not the case now at all. God has taken well care of me. This is a long time ago.

And he said, you know, I just feel so bad. It's just not fair. And I looked at him and I said, yeah, it's just not fair.

He kind of looked at me. He didn't expect me to agree with him. I said, yeah, it's just not fair, brother.

I really feel sorry for you. I almost feel like I need to apologize. But I can't fight against the sovereignty of God.

It's what he did. And he goes, what are you talking about? I said, brother, I just really, I'm sorry that your plot in life has turned out this way. And he said, no, I mean the reverse.

And I said, no, you've got it backwards. I said, all you have is money. I said, every time I bow my knee, I sense the presence of God.

Almost every time I open this book, He teaches me something. I've seen Him save people. I've seen Him heal people.

I've seen Him do miracles that cannot be explained. I'm so sorry that your lot in life has just fallen to money. You see? He gives us the desire of our heart.

Boy, don't look over what He's done. Do you realize? At least me. Look at me.

I have a wife and I have three children. The house is solid. If it wasn't for Christ, I'd either be an alcoholic or dead.

Probably married three times. Children that hated their dad because he was a self-centered jerk. I mean, you can't out-bless God.

You have no idea what you would be if it wasn't for Him. He gives us the desires of our heart. And see, the meek man knows that.

He's not morbidly following Christ like the disciples. When Jesus said He was going to Jerusalem, they're like, well, let's just go to Jerusalem and die with Him for no purpose whatsoever. That's not the way a meek man follows God.

He follows Him happily, full of hope at what God is going to do through him and in his life. He says He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord.

What's a meek man? This is it right here. He commits his way to the Lord. A meek man does not try to figure out his own way.

He doesn't cut through the land to build his own canal. He doesn't work to climb a ladder or manipulate or do anything. He commits his way to the Lord.

Lord, You do with me what You want. I'm going to follow You. I commit my way to You.

But the meek man knows, trust also in Him and He will do it. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light. Again, this is not a morbid I'm going to lose for the sake of following God.

He knows God's going to vindicate him. God will bring forth his righteousness. God will be his helper.

So a meek man is ultimately one who trusts God, commits his way to God. Proverbs 3.5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. The meek man is the man who does that.

Now, it goes on. Look at 7. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him. What is it? Isaiah 30.15 In quietness and in trust shall be your strength.

Hudson Taylor is such a great example of this. The war was brewing all around him and he's there in the missionary compound in his office. The army is basically at the gate of the compound.

They've killed people, murdered people, everything. There's nothing to stop them from coming into the compound, killing everybody. And one of the workers runs into Hudson Taylor's office and is just, you know, they're coming, they're coming.

And Hudson Taylor is sitting there at his desk singing hymns. The guy goes, what are you doing? They're right outside. They're going to kill us all.

And Hudson Taylor looked up and said, what do you want me to do? What can I do? What should I do? I can't stop them. I can't escape. If I'm going to die, I would rather die singing hymns to the Lord.

And if the Lord wants to spare me, He can, but no one else can. So look what he's doing here. He's resting in the Lord.

He's waiting patiently for Him. He does not fret because of Him who prospers in the way. Listen, do not fret because of evil men.

Evil men outside of the church, evil men inside of the church. Don't fret because of them. Wait patiently upon the Lord.

Now, just really quick, look at verse 8. Cease from anger and forsake wrath. Do not fret. It leads only to evil doings.

You see what he's doing? Look, to fret and become angry at the situation around you is not to be meek. Trust in the Lord. Lean on Him.

He will vindicate you. He will bring forth your righteousness. And then it says in 10, yet a little while, and the wicked man will be no more.

You will look carefully for his place and he will not be there. But the humble will inherit the land and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity. That's what it means to be meek.

Doesn't that teach you a lot more than just, well, meekness doesn't mean weakness? Look at that text. Because that is one of the greatest, greatest needs in our life today is to be meek. Let's pray.

Father, thank You for Your Word. Thank You for Your kindness to us. Thank You for the power of Your Spirit.

In Jesus' name, amen.

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