

Welcome back to the second edition of the Sermon of the Mount Beatitudes Chapter 2. We're gonna be dealing with the meek.

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

The meaning word 'meek'. In Greek it means gentleness and self-control. Word is often used to describe soothing medicine or soft breeze. Applies to servants. Secular concept is that the meek are weak.

The total opposite of the meek and the strong. In secular concept is dictators; Saddam Hussein, Adolf Hitler, Napoleon Bonaparte, they are strong but did they inherit the earth, yes they did, six feet of the earth. The Greek philosopher Aristotle understood meekness as the golden mean. It was the point between extreme anger and extreme angerlessness, controlled and balanced, getting angry the right things at the right time. Angry at injustice in the world but not at personal insults.

Here we have a historical document of a Greek soldier who writes to his fiancée,

"The most magnificent animal I've ever seen. He responds obediently to the slightest commands. He allows his master to direct him to his full potential." He is a meek horse."

Meekness is like that sumo wrestler confronting a small little child. He outweighs the child 10 to 1. He is not worried at all. He can afford to be gentle because there's no way the child's gonna beat him. So he is like a Christian. In Christ, we already see ourselves as possessing everything. Our future is secured. We will inherit the earth. In fact, we will inherit the new heavens and the new earth. So only the genuinely meek person, the genuinely meek man will be content because he doesn't have to grasp for more. He doesn't need more because he's got everything in Christ and he can afford to be meek.

Meekness is not weakness or cowardice. Look at our Lord Jesus Christ when he was being tortured.

When he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered him, "If what I said was wrong, bear witness about the wrong, but if what I said was right, why do you strike me? Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas."

Jesus was not afraid to speak up.

Meekness often results in the death of Christians. Every six minutes a Christian is killed for following Jesus Christ. In the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt militants are persecuting Coptic Christians. One of them included a 40-year-old veterinary surgeon and his 17 year old son Rashid spoke to his father's murder. My father received many threatening phone calls, demanding to convert to Islam and force my mother and sister to wear the hijab but he never heeded their threats. He wanted us to stand firm in our faith and not to allow the fear of death to overpower our honour. One day they robbed his clinic and shot him in his head, but Rashid said these words,

'I extend forgiveness to the ones who've killed my father and sent him to be with Jesus.'

You see the meek suffer and who have been humbled and yet they do not seek revenge but God's glory and the welfare of others. In other words they lovingly trust God and hope in God's timing and God's justice.

In this situation meekness is opposed to wrath, anger, violence, death, brutal reclamation's of the land. Tenderness results in a cycle of violence where there's an issue of insult which is reciprocated by an assault, which is then reciprocated by revenge and an escalation of the revenge

and the whole thing devolves into a cycle of violence. The same thing had happened within a fellowship of a church where one insult leads to another insult in retaliation and pretty soon the two do not speak to each other. They're not on speaking terms anymore and it hardly looks like a church.

Genesis after Cain killing his brother Abel, by the time it comes to his descendant Lamech, he boasts, I've killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-seven fold.

You can see in popular movies like The Godfather, revenge is a dish best served cold. And here revenge is supposed to be part of the scene when you're a mobster because of power play. You have to take revenge for people to fear you, keeps your status in your face and also happens where the rule of law is weak or absent.

Popular movies like Rambo always portray revenge a suite with a hero triumphing in the end, but there's a real cost, a real human cost to revenge as shown by research published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology by a Kevin Kyle Smith. He writes,

When we don't get revenge, we're able to trivialize the event. We tell ourselves that because we didn't act on our vengeful feelings, it wasn't a big deal, so it's easier to forget it and move on, but when we do get revenge you can no longer trivialize the situation, instead we think about it a lot. Rather than providing closure it does the opposite. It keeps the wound open and fresh.

There is a real human cost to revenge. Now there's a cycle of escalation with injury and assaults, retaliation but if you're meek, your weakness will then break this cycle and bring in its place. Peace and reconciliation instead.

One of the best Psalms that actually speaks to third beatitude is Psalm 37 and it starts of talking about this issue of us getting upset because of evildoers.

Fret not because of evildoers;

When we look at them we shouldn't be envious of evildoers. They seem that they can get away with everything but we're not supposed to get upset about.

Fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way.

So the fact that people do evil and they get away with it makes us upset, we're worried, we want to retaliate but verse eight tells us

Refrain from anger, forsake wrath! Fret not yourself

Because if you fret, it will only turn back to evil which is basically revenge.

Look at this famous couple and we look at all the jewellery they have stolen, which is a fraction of what they have stolen from this country. We tend to react viscerally. We tend to get very upset about what they have done, but if we actually think about it and look back in this particular Psalm, you can actually see answer which the psalmist have given. Look at a couple of that and he says, in the end

Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord.

Don't fret about evil. And we are asked. If you look in verse 5

Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.

So how do we become meek in the presence of such evil getting away with it. We commit ourselves to the Lord. We trust in him. We don't retaliate. We are still before God and we're waiting very patiently because one day we know that he will act. And the reasons we can be meek is because evil will be dealt with one day. Verse 2,

For they will soon fade away like the grass and wither like the green herb.

Verse 9,

Evildoers will be cut off

Then you've got verse 10,

In just a little while, the wicked will be no more, though you look very carefully at his place, he will not be there anymore.

You know where he will be, he will be in court. He will be facing jail. He will be facing a whole slew of charge.

The reason why we can be meek is because in the end God vindicates us. He will give you the desires of your heart. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your justice as the noonday.

He'll actually vindicate us and prove that we were right or wrong.

But those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.

It is us in the end. Verse 11,

But the meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

So it doesn't matter what happens now because whatever it is, they can't get away.

In summary, meekness is the unassuming humility that rests in God and renounces self-effort of violence to relieve one's oppression and to achieve one's desire. A person totally comfortable in trusting God.