



22 August 2025

Blessed are the gentle

Today we come to the third statement of Jesus in the beatitudes,

“Blessed are the gentle (or, meek), for they will inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5).

Remember that *blessed* means to be *happy* in the sense of having a steadfast delightful certainty from God that does not go up and down with the breezes and storms of life.

The nine beatitudes go together and depend on, even build on each other. Look at the first three. Jesus began with being “poor in spirit”, that is, recognizing that on our own we are spiritually bankrupt and have nothing to offer God. Then as we go from there to mourning, to having genuine sorrow over our sin, and now also as we are gentle, God gifts us with true happiness.

The word gentle or meek has been and is frequently misunderstood. Often it is thought of as being weak or timid. Let’s be clear, as it has been said, “meek does not mean weak.” Or, again, as one writer suggests, “There is nothing mousy about meekness.”

The word Jesus used was widely used with broad applications. It described medicine which soothed, quieted a patient, of a colt which had been broken so now you could ride it, and of pleasant winds for sailing. A common thread is strength or power being under control. For example, the colt which is broken is still powerful, but is now useful to the owner since its power is under control.

Jesus is saying, “Truly happy are those, and only those, who have their strength, power under control, for they, and only they, will inherit the earth.” Gentleness flows from and through humility, humility that comes from seeing ourselves as we are before God and also not above others. Jesus is our supreme example. He tells us, invites us,

“Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is comfortable, and My burden is light.

Blessed are the
gentle,
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Matthew 5:5



Matthew 11:28-30

Scripture tells us that gentleness is to be woven through all of our being and expressed, for example, in presenting our witness with “gentleness and respect” and when correcting others “in a spirit of gentleness.” This gentleness is not natural, but supernatural. Remember the apostle Paul wrote, “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control.”

Even as we sort out what gentleness is, we are still left with what can be a perplexing question, “What did Jesus mean here when He said the gentle will inherit the earth?” The starting point for answering this is to remember Jesus is talking about life evaluated by God, not by people, and life in the kingdom of God, not the way of this world. Many of the most powerful and wealthy people in our world do not display gentleness.

Some suggest that Jesus is speaking only of a future time when Christ reigns on earth. While that is included, it is not the first or only sense that Jesus has for being gentle, and all the beatitudes. There is a here and now blessing from God for being gentle that goes along with true happiness. Let’s look at a few Bible truths that help us.

Psalm 37 verse 16 instructs us, “Better is the little of the righteous than the abundance of many wicked.” Don’t miss this! A little that a righteous person has is better than the riches that many wicked people have.

As the apostle Paul corrected people in the church at Corinth who were having difficulty in being gentle with each other, he told them, “no one is to be boasting in people. For all things belong to you, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come; all things belong to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God” (1 Corinthians 3:21-23).

Then in his second letter to that church, speaking from his experience, Paul wrote, “as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing all things” (2 Corinthians 6:10).

The here and now blessing of inheriting the earth is not about position, power or wealth. It is about *reigning in life* (Romans 5:17) as we see the things of this world as God’s gift to us, as we see them in perspective and enjoy all of them as they ought to be enjoyed. Yes, we have set our hope on God “who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy” (1 Timothy 6:17).

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