

S.W. Sept 29, 70 P.M. WXRI

## MEASURING MEEKNESS

Matt. 5:5

### INTRODUCTION:

You pick up a yardstick with the idea of measuring an object or a piece of goods.

When we come to the Sermon on the Mount, we have a yardstick for measuring meekness. You will remember that the design was the Kingdom man. He was to point out the principles, the internal, spiritual part of this man.

It is a very simple talk. I mean by that, that everyone could understand what he was saying. The language was in the words of the common people. If Jesus should be sitting before us this evening, I would expect young and old would understand these familiar, direct sentences.

The style of paradox is something that seems to be contrary -- for instance, happy are the unhappy. Blessed are they that mourn. Now Jesus selected objects that were well known to the people and they were familiar with them.

Always remember The Sermon on the Mount is giving the characteristics, the privileges, and the happiness of the Kingdom man as set forth in these Beatitudes. If a man possesses the Kingdom of God, and if a man is allowed to see God, and live with him, and if a man receives a reward from God at the last day -- this is going to be a spring of happiness.

The poet Burns expresses it -

It is not entitles nor in rank

It is not in wealth like London's bank

To purchase peace and rest

If happiness have not her seat

And center in the breast

| But never can be blessed.

This part of the sermon explains how Paul cover with wounds, in prison at midnight could sing praises to God.

There is one other thing that I would like to point out before I continue with this study tonight. And that is the Beatitudes expressed a great philosophy which can be contrasted with the epicureanism, and stoicism.

1 The epicurean taught - you have appetites. If you would be happy, gratify them - eat, drink, and be merry.

2 The stoic said you have appetites - if you would be happy - dig them up by the roots. Remove them.

The Sermon on the Mount says you have appetites - you would be happy - regulate them. Neither gratify nor suppress - but turn them into worthy objects. If you really want to live now and if you want to live hereafter. Happy is the man who is in his inner, higher nature - is conscious of his poverty in God's sight. And blessed are them that mourn.

Now remember that I said the Sermon on the Mount is addressed to the Disciples. It is not addressed to those who do not profess Christianity. In fact the New Testament has just one word for the man who is not a Christian - and that word is repent and believe. And if you repent and you believe - then the New Testament has everything to say to you. The New Testament is not something that pretends to guide the lives of men of the world. It is not a code of good ethics.

Therefore, when he says blessed are the meek - he does not mean that you are



talk about inheritance. Somebody is going to leave them in their will and that is like this. The earth is going to be left to them.

Now meekness is not looked upon by the man of the world as an asset -- he thinks of it as a liability. In other words, he despises it. And he has content for this. And the world would be ashamed of such a virtue.

The world would say blessed are the strong who can hold their own.

But this wonderful sermon is a great mine of spiritual gold - if we can just dig down deep enough and discover it.

Because God intended that man should live according to his plan, and live abundantly. The world thinks in terms of power, strength, and ability and aggressiveness.

Now the Christian must begin at the very beginning. He is different in quality, he is a new man - a new creature. And people today, as in that day, had an idea that the Kingdom was only materialistic and military.

But Jesus is saying this is not the way. It is not in terms of fighting. And this is the thing we have to somehow see. That many times this takes place in the church of Jesus Christ. The church becomes divided. We must all get together and be organized to face the organized enemy.

Jesus is saying - blessed are the meek. He is not saying blessed are those that trust their own organization, trust their own power, trust their own institutions. He says the very reverse.

You remember the Bible story Gideon. Instead of telling him to add numbers, God told him to reduce his numbers. And this was to be a spiritual method for victory. And it was amazing - just as amazing as the statement in the Sermon on the Mount.

The relationship of this Beatitude has connection with the others that have gone before. The poor in spirit, those that mourn are aware of their sins. And now the progression gets more difficult. Because meekness is more searching, more difficult, more humbling.

We are called upon to realize our own weakness. Our own inability, to feel that we have nothing - we are truly helpless and we are hopeless. And this is a great yardstick, measuring our lives.

### I. Meekness Is A Yardstick Of Character.

Ordinarily we would think we were describing the disposition of a man in regard perhaps to other men - and that we are talking about those who are weak.

I read a story of a missionary in Jamaica where once he was questioning a group of boys about the meaning of this text. He asked the question, who are the meek?

The boy answered, those who give soft answers to rough questions.

Psalm 37:11 But the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

So here is the message - where the wicked are plotting against the just but the Lord will laugh at him for he sees that his day is coming. Quite often we link the word "meek" and little together.



The French word translated for meek - hence a man who is so gladdened and overcome by God's grateness) that he counts his own life as nothing. A man daily gives it for love's sake.

The Greek word means (good will toward men and reverent obedience toward God.) Hence is the attitude toward (accepting) God's dealings toward us.

Now the ox that kicks against the goads does two things. He does not get away from them, and second - it wounds him and drives the sharp points deeper into his flesh. So meekness toward God is patience and endurance to do his will. This meekness does not mean weakness - feeble or frail.

Matt. 11:29 - Jesus ~~was~~ said to be meek and lowly in heart.

Eph. 4:2 - Speaks that they must be lowly and meek in reference to Christ.

2 Tim. 2:24-25 - Paul to Timothy, tells him not to strive, but to be gentle, apt to teach and meek in his spirit.

Meekness then is a yardstick of character. The saints and the elders fall down before the throne and they feel great humility.

## II. Some Examples Of Meekness

It is always good to think about examples when we are measuring meekness. Some men are like dogs - they answer bark for bark. That is they answer all evil with evil. Somebody depreciates them - they do not understand that they are not harmed. But the person who does this is the one that is harmed. And the meek person must have patience and love just the same. This is not easy but is the plain Christian duty.

Even men in (theology) are ready to fight - and express hatred, even as they try to fight battles in the Kingdom of God. They want to be a steam roller.

But it is like an ice berg, you could take a steam hammer and go and beat on an ice berg - you would do very little to it. But it would still be ice. But you let that ice berg drift down into the South where the sun beats down on it, into the warm water, and its coldness disappears. Meekness is a conquerer.

Abraham is a great example of meekness. Think for a moment of Lot, and how this older man allows the younger man to assert himself and make his choice.

Moses, who is actually described as the meekest man on the face of the earth, examines his character. And you discover that he had great power at one time. In the courts of Pharaoh and yet he denied it all to serve God. He was the law giver - but he was described as meek.

David, he suffered humiliation by Saul. Saul was unjust - unkind to him. Made an attempt on his life.

Now Jeremiah was unpopular with his message. He called upon the people to speak the truth. Now that's not the thing that he really wanted to do. And this was not an easy thing. He would rather talk about smoothe things. But he did not say what every body else was saying in his day.

Paul, who suffered at the hands of different churches and different people, and he tried to lead these unkind people in the hard things they had said about him.

Jesus is our example here. Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden and I will give you rest.



Remember this, that meekness was not a natural character of quality. But all Christians are met to be like this. We are not by nature this way. And we see that it is not easy going.

### III. What Do We Find In Meek Men As They Are Measured

I want to give you a list of a few things that I think you will discover.

1. First, meek men are not over sensitive when wrong comes. Several things are going to happen to a man. *inadequate - Batam Rooster in A Corral - wild horses - Finally Horses stopped galloping about - Rooster scowled Please Please lets Not Step on each other! -*

First, he is quick to react - he has been stunned. And he feels resentment. And there is something that tells him to resist it with all his force.

When you look at a meek man, you see a man that is not sensitive about himself. He is not always watching out for his own interest. He is not always on the defensive and seeking to protect himself. The meek man does not always pity himself - feel sorry for himself.

A man who truly sees himself as nobody else can, realizing that he is not a perfect man.

2. Second The meek man is the one who is amazed that God can think so much of him. And that other men treat him so well as they do. He will not be over sensitive.

The meek man will express gentleness. Now this is a rare characteristic. The high quality of character is in direct response to Christianity. There is gentleness in his life. Kindness, in his ways.

I wonder if often the opposite is not true. Children today are given toys which represent - violence, guns, tanks, fighting planes, soldiers, war. And this

is given to them for entertainment.

The magazine ads offer more fuel to hatred, lust, and to passion.

Neighborhood quarrels in which there is fighting over the problems in the schools, the gang wars of the teen-agers. All of this is a menace in our cities. And on top of this father and mothers rangle and bicker.

The public officials in Washington engage in name calling, and heated disputes. Now none of this is in keeping with the dignity of their office.

Because we have said that might is right. And we have lost the gentleness, the kindness, that ought to be a part of the Kingdom man.

Now the Bible says that wisdom that is from above is first pure, and then peaceful and gentle, and easy to be full of mercy and good fruits. James 3:17.

This might be illustrated in the breaking of a wild horse. Now his energy is out of control and he is dangerous. But once the wild horse has been subdued, and brought under control and gets under discipline, he becomes a wonderful work animal. Now Jesus is not talking about doing away with our powers, but he is talking about re-directing them. You have a bad temper - lots of people do, of course. But if you are going to let it out of control, you are not a very meek person. Now you may have ego. You may be conscious of being an individual and you may worship yourself. You have a tongue and a voice - you can slander, you can nag and quarrel. You can grip, as we say. Now you can bring these things under the control of God's spirit. To become great instruments of blessings and for praise. James 3:3.



3 The third thing you find in a meek man is yieldedness. He is yielded to God. He does not fight against God and God's rule, but he simply lets go and let God work in his behalf.

The meek man then is not proud of himself, but he has turned around his position and yielded himself unto God. He is now seeking to glorify God and not himself. Because he has nothing within himself to boast.

Brethren, we need for our right relation to our fellows a deep conviction of our own sinfulness before God. Now right at that point is the test for Christian people. Patience to receive God's part, to be meek with God as well as with man. And to receive God's pardon.

4 The fourth thing, the meek man will have forbearance. The means to abstain from condemning others.

To refrain from judging the actions and motives of all the people about you. With all the lowliness and meekness, and long suffering. Eph. 4:2.

This generation today is very quick to judge but they are very slow with the ointment of healing.

We have our harsh criticisms of others, unfair appraisals of those about us, and they might hurt them but really it might hurt us more than it does them.

Many a person is lonely today because he or she has been driven away by his own bitterness. Many friends are lonely today because they did not show forbearance.

Many marriages are on the rocks because of nagging and scolding. Titus 3:2. Speak evil of no man but gentle showing all meekness unto all men.

You cannot be happy as long as you magnify the faults of others, and minimize their virtues. This is the answer in neighborhood quarrel, family fusses, community feuds. Col. 3:13. Forbearing one another and forgiving one another. Even as Christ forgave you.

I read the story of an old Deacon who had been mistreated again and again by a man who represented him. The old Deacon said publicly, I am going to kill my enemy. Now word got to his enemy, and he heard of the old man's intentions and he waited to see what this harmless old saint would do. Actually instead of rendering evil for evil - the old Deacon sought out every opportunity to do his enemy good. Now at first this was fun, for the enemy, and he made light of it. At last one day, this old man risk his life to save the drowning wife of his enemy. And the deadlock between them was broken.

Alright said his enemy, you have done what you said you would do. You have killed me, at least you have killed the man that I was. Now what can I do for you.

Paul expressed this when he urged Christians about how they should get along.

5 The fifth thing you will find in the meek man is that he receives guidance in his judgement. Because the Holy Spirit will teach him along the way. It is very much like God moving in the pillar to guide the children of Israel. His passions may rise, the storm may come, the calm waters may be ruffled, but always there is the still small voice. And the meek man will wait for God. God will indicate the day and he will give the man the answer he needs.

In this age of high strung neurotic impatience, I think the poem which describes many homes is so true.



There was a beef stew marriage  
And their case was somewhat crude  
The wife was always beefing  
And the husband always stewed.

Now I read about a woman once who came to the preacher. She would like for the preacher to talk to her husband, about becoming a Christian. And so he did. And the man said my wife is a good home-maker but if religion will make me as impatient as she is - I don't want any part of it.

The preacher had to talk to the wife again. And when he told her the situation, in tears she confessed her sins. The sin of impatience. And so a few days later the husband came in from fishing and walked through the front room and incidently knocked a precious vase and shattered it on the floor. Well, he braced himself that there was going to be a second crash from his nervous wife. But instead she said, think nothing of it dear, things like that happen in the best of families.

I need not to go on with this little story any farther, for I think that you get the idea what I am driving at. We will receive guidance - blessed are the meek.

It is like the harness of the oxen with the goad which is for control. It is useful. It helps to channel his energies in the right path. But when he kicks against it, quarrels with it, and lives a rebellious life - he merely hurts himself.

Meekness is not something you just acquire yourself or that you can get from a college. It is not something that you discover in a laboratory. But it is God

given.

You will never live a Christian life on your own strength. You must be guided by him. A meek walk is a Godly walk. While others seek revenge, you must be guided of his spirit.

Now the Jews had pride in their race. The Roman's had pride in their power. The Greeks had pride in their knowledge. But the Christian is to have pride in his meekness.

b. In the sixth place, the meek man is going to be vindicated.

The main message is that we leave everything in the hands of God. If we suffer unjustly, do not forget. God's said vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord. Now we need not to go around repaying people, we just deliver ourselves to the hands of God. And the Lord will revenge and the Lord will repay.

Adonibezk, who cut off the thumbs and the toes of 70 kings. Later we know, that he had his own cut off.

Those that crucified Jesus of Nazareth, many of them in turn were crucified on wooden crosses. Remember the meek shall be vindicated.

#### IV. The Astonishing Reward of the Meek

Psalm 37:11 - Jesus used the quotation, the meek shall inherit the earth. They shall inherit and that is the idea he used when he talked about the children of Israel going into the promise land. That they would inherit the land. They shall inherit what God has promised them - the land of Canaan.



Typical of Christian rest and Christian rest is typical of (redemption).  
The meek are promised that they are going to inherit God's promises. The poor folks were inheriting everything as far as the material and the possessions of this earth. Now the phrase inherit the land is a symbol of the rest of God which is the type of Christian rest - and this is Christian redemption. And it makes it every plain. It means just a willingness to obey and readiness to discipline. You can't get the first meaning without the second. These two ideas are found in the word meek. Coming into the Kingdom.

Now if the man is being prepared for a place in the Kingdom, he must have a life conformable to the divine character. What God requires. It is conformed by doing what God requires. You know by doing. And the very fact that you are doing something - doing it has an effect upon you, doesn't it.

Which says how can a fellow know this truth, and respect this truth, if he does not do it.

If you are a horse thief, this will have an effect upon your character.

Now when you come to obey God, and come under this force of discipline, then you are going to have the assurance of the Kingdom. Congratulations to you who are meek. (You are in touch) with Christ.