

"The Sermon on the Mount"

The Beatitudes

Part 4

Matthew 5:1-12

Introduction: The last time we were together we were looking at the Beatitudes found in Matthew 5 and so far we have looked at 3 of them.

- 1. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**
- 2. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.**
- 3. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.**

Now last week we looked at the "meek" and what it means to be "meek" and as I told you last week meekness is the most difficult characteristic there is to practice in our lives. Let me just refresh your memory on the meaning of "meekness":

"To be meek is to trust in the sovereignty of God in our lives. It is to accept whatever comes as His plan for us. It is to die to self and allow the Holy Spirit to have His way in our lives and to use the pain and the struggles as a furnace to burn away the dross. It is to believe that in all things we are more than conquerors because God uses the trials as His workshops to mold us into the image of Jesus Christ. Meekness refuses to seek vengeance against those that inflict pain into our lives but instead meekness accepts their actions as a part of God's plan for our lives also. Remember that when Jesus was reviled, He reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. To be meek is also to bow to God's chastening in our lives and to accept it with a teachable spirit so as to learn from the pain and the suffering that He has brought upon us.

Meekness does not resist the plan of God no matter the pain. Let me remind you that Jesus was led as a lamb to the slaughter He was not dragged. Therefore, meekness is exercised in two different directions: toward God and toward man."

Meekness is not weakness and it is not being timid. Meekness is power under control. It is refraining from the desire to "fight" against the challenges of life. It is refraining from the desire to seek vengeance on those who rise against us. It is not to lie down and allow others to trample underfoot the Truth of God's Word. Jesus was meek but He still stood for the Truth. Meekness is not apathy. Meekness does not mean we do not fight against evil. Meekness is being so controlled by the Spirit that we see everything through the eyes of God.

Jesus then went on and said the meek shall inherit the earth. In our study last week we discussed one of the possibilities of the meaning of this statement. The word "earth" means "land". Those that Jesus spoke to the day He delivered the sermon were Old Testament people and so their mind would have connected "the land" with Canaan. The word "inheritance" would have also taken their minds to the Old Testament promise of Israel's inheritance of the land of Canaan.

Now the "Canaan" that we are promised today is God's rest.

Hebrews 4:9-10

⁹ *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*

¹⁰ *For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.*

Therefore, when Jesus referred to the meek inheriting the earth He could have had in mind the rest that is available to those who have

ceased from their own works. In other words when we are meek we do not fight against the will of God but instead we surrender and as we have discussed before there is peace in surrender. When we fight against the path God has placed us on there is nothing but bitterness and unrest but when we surrender and we accept it as God's will then there is a peace that floods the soul.

Now there is another possible meaning to Jesus statement that I want to consider.

When Jesus referred to the inheriting the "earth" I do not believe that He had in mind this earth because this earth will one day be destroyed. But He may have had in mind the new earth that will come at the end of the Kingdom Age right after the Great White throne Judgment.

Revelation 20:1-7

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

² And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

³ And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

⁴ And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

⁵ *And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.*

⁶ *And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.*

⁷ **He that overcometh shall inherit all things;** *and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*

This may have been what Jesus had in mind. Let me show you another verse that will point us in the same direction.

Romans 8:16-17

¹⁶ *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

¹⁷ *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;*

Now let us consider a few thoughts. If we exercise the spirit of meekness in our lives then that may mean that we end up at the end of this life with little of this world's wealth. Remember the people that Peter wrote and how they were under the persecution of Nero? Many of them lost all they had because they were blamed for the fire in Rome and it was the will of God for them to go through the suffering. As they went through the suffering they were to exercise the spirit of meekness.

1 Peter 3:17

¹⁷ *For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.*

1 Peter 5:6-7

⁶ Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

⁷ Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Here is an example where these believers were to exercise the spirit of meekness and in so doing many had lost all they had, some even their lives. But there is one thing they had that neither Nero nor anyone else in Rome could take from them, that was an inheritance on the new earth.

Application:

As we pass through this old world we too are called on to exercise the spirit of meekness and in so doing we may find ourselves at the end of life with nothing of this world. But that is ok for we have an eternal inheritance in the new earth that no one can take from us. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth!

4. Blessed are they which do hunger thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

The next of the beatitudes deals with a hunger and a thirst. There is in each believer 3 sources of appetite.

1. There is a physical appetite.
2. There is an appetite of the flesh or the old nature.
3. There is an appetite produced by the Holy Spirit that lives within us.

An unsaved person has the first two appetites but will not have the third appetite because they do not have the Holy Spirit. No matter how moral someone may be, if they are not saved they can have no appetite for the righteousness that Jesus speaks of here. This hunger and thirst for righteousness can only be within a person that has the Holy Spirit for this appetite is produced by Him.

But not every believer is controlled by this appetite. Some believers show very little evidence of even possessing this appetite. The majority of believers are controlled by the appetite of the flesh.

Therefore, in order for us to hunger and thirst after righteousness we must be controlled by the Holy Spirit. To hunger and to thirst after righteousness is to desire to move deeper into our relationship with the Father and the Son. It is to have a hunger and a thirst to be more like Jesus Christ. We must understand that there is a battle that is raging within each of us that know Jesus as our Savior. Paul's words in Romans 7 revealed the battle within him.

Romans 7:15

¹⁵ For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

Romans 7:23-24

²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

We all have the battle within us between the flesh and the Spirit. So how do I gain victory over this battle?

In order to be controlled by the Spirit in our lives it takes discipline. We must be willing to say, "No" to the appetites of the flesh and say, "Yes" to the leading of the Holy Spirit. We must be willing to die to the appetites of the flesh. There are 2 dangers we must avoid:

1. We must not quench the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 5:19

¹⁹ Quench not the Spirit.

To "quench" a fire is to put the fire out. When He convicts us of sin in our lives and we refuse to repent and confess the sin that is "quenching" the Holy Spirit.

2. We must not grieve the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:30

³⁰ And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

To "grieve" the Holy Spirit is to disobey Him as He plants His desires within our heart and mind. To "grieve" the Holy Spirit is to suppress Him when He desires to have His way in our lives.

Now as we submit to the Holy Spirit and we allow Him to have His way there is something else that will take place. We will be made more aware of our true sinfulness. This is the key to hungering and thirsting after righteousness. To have that deep down hunger and thirst for the righteousness of Christ in our lives we must be made aware of our true

sinful condition. I am convinced that God will often permit His people to experience several things in order to keep us hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

- 1. He will allow a weakness that we have to stay in our lives while at anytime He could remove that weakness permanently.**

He permits that weakness to be a thorn in our flesh in order to remind us of our true condition so as we will hunger and thirst after His righteousness.

2 Corinthians 12:7-9

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

⁸ For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

⁹ And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

We do not know what Paul's thorn was but I believe that every believer has some sort of thorn that keeps us reminded of our true spiritual condition in the flesh so we will continue to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

- 2. He will permit us to fall while at anytime He could keep us from the falling.**

We have talked about this before but the point is that God allows us to fall at times (He does not cause us to fall) for it does three things in the believer;

- a. It helps us to see our true sinful condition.
- b. It strips us of all self dependence.
- c. It causes us to hunger and thirst after His righteousness.

A good example of this in the Scriptures is Peter. When Peter failed the Lord he was brought face to face with his true condition and he was completely stripped of self trust. He then hungered for the righteousness of Christ in his life. In Romans 8:28 we are told that ALL things work together for our good. If ALL means all then that is even our failures.

Conclusion:

When we hunger and thirst after righteousness Jesus promises that we will be filled. You see when we are hungering and thirsting after righteousness we are right where God can work with us.