

# *“Blessed Are The Meek”*

Matthew 5:5

January 5, 2025

**INTRO:** *What’s it take to set you off & or get you off track?*

- Consider the world... your flesh... &/or the devil.
- What’s it take to keep you plugged in & on track?
- *Today’s answer will shock, anger, &/or bless most.*

## **PRAYER**

**CONTEXT:**

- Matthew’s Gospel on Christ’s Gospel... mMm
- Begun 1<sup>st</sup> of 5 great discourses: see chiasmic arch
- Sermon on the Mount begins with beatitudes...
- Today: the 3<sup>rd</sup>... **MESSIAH-LIKE MEEKNESS**

**BIG IDEA:** Biblical meekness  
is mighty & missional!

**PREVIEW:**

1. God’s **BLESSED** - *the People*
2. God’s **BLESSING** - *the Promise*
3. God’s **BUILDING** - *the Process*

**TEXT:**

**Matthew 5:5**

*Blessed are the meek/gentle,  
for they shall inherit the land/earth.*

**T/S:** This beatitude paraphrases the heart of Psalm 37:11  
“But the humble will inherit the (promised) land.”

&

*Remember... we are building on more than the Psalms...*

## I. God's BLESSED

*Blessed are the meek/gentle,*

(Let's define & describe the who/what of blessed & meek.)

### A. WHAT is BLESSED?

- **“Blessed”** (see below)
- **“are”** = active present tense/possessive

Matthew 5:5  
(Amplified Bible)

*“Blessed [inwardly peaceful, spiritually secure, worthy of respect] are the meek/gentle [the kind-hearted, the sweet-spirited, the self-controlled], for they will inherit the earth.*

### B. WHO are BLESSED? (per Jesus thus far...)

- a. Those who will *see the kingdom of heaven...*
- b. Those who will be *comforted by the King...*
- c. Those who will *inherit the Land...*
- d. Those who will be *satisfied in righteousness...*

### c. WHAT is MEEK?

***“the meek/gentle,”***

(Now define & describe what is, who is & who is NOT meek.)

#### ➤ What is biblical meekness?

- Cultural Historians:

In the Greco-Roman world, **meekness** was not typically considered a virtue.

- Biblical Dictionary:

**a soothing medicine or a soft breeze; a quality of character that is marked by humility and a gentle spirit.**

**tranquil and untroubled**

demonstrating power without undue harshness.

It was used of colts and other animals whose naturally wild spirits were broken by a trainer so that they could do useful work.

**AS A HUMAN ATTITUDE IT MEANT BEING GENTLE OF SPIRIT, SUBMISSIVE, QUIET, & TENDERHEARTED.**

***The essential difference between being poor in spirit and being meek, or gentle, may be that poverty in spirit focuses on our sinfulness, whereas meekness focuses on God's holiness.***

The basic attitude of **humility underlies both virtues.** When we look honestly at ourselves, we are made humble by seeing how sinful and unworthy we are; when we look at God, we are made humble by seeing how righteous and worthy He is.

○ Missional Theologians:

**Christianity has lifted the word meekness to a higher plane, and made it the symbol of a higher good... *The meekness of the Christian springs from a sense of the inferiority of the creature to the Creator, and especially of the sinful creature to the holy God.* - Vincent's Word Studies**

**Barnes:**

Meekness is patience in the reception of injuries, with a belief that God will vindicate us.

**("Vengeance is his; he will repay," Romans 12:19)**

Meekness produces peace...

**Meekness is the opposite of sudden anger, of malice, of long-harbored vengeance.**

Meekness comes from a heart too great to be moved by little insults.

*He that is constantly ruffled; that suffers every little insult or injury to throw him off his guard and to raise a storm of passion within, is at the mercy of every mortal that chooses to disturb him.*

Meekness is to be considered, not as a moral virtue, but as a Christian grace, a fruit of the Spirit of God; which was exemplified in Christ, & is very ornamental to believers; and of great advantage and use to them... **the meek are well pleasing to God...** – Gill

**Meekness is the attitude of the soul towards another...**

Meekness towards God  
necessarily issues in meekness towards men.

- Pulpit Commentary

**D. WHO are & are NOT the MEEK?**

➤ Who are the biblical meek?

Paul was meek...

*"the meekness and gentleness of Christ"*

2 Cor. 10:1

Jesus is meek...

*"I am meek"*

Matthew 11:29

Persons of a mild, gentle, long-suffering, self-controlled, and forgiving disposition, who are slow to anger, and... not easily provoked, and... who never resent an injury, nor return evil for evil; but... overcome evil with good; who... endeavor to reconcile... and to win their offenders over to peace and love. – Benson

*To the meek, the earth is not a stage for self-assertion and the graspings of desire, but an "inheritance" which they have received from their Father. – Ellicot*

Those who exercise God's strength under His control

The meek are those who quietly submit to God; who can bear insult; are silent, or return a soft answer...

– Matthew Henry

Those reflecting the character of Christ Himself...with a deep trust in God and a commitment to His ways, even in the face of adversity.

**ONLY THE MEEK & HUMBLE HEART REFUSES TO FIGHT AGAINST GOD<sup>11</sup>**

**: Pulpit Commentary**

The meek are those whom the world tramples on.

▪ **Bengal**

**THE MEEK PERSON HAS DIED TO SELF, AND HE THEREFORE DOES NOT WORRY ABOUT INJURY TO HIMSELF, OR ABOUT LOSS, INSULT, OR ABUSE.**

**Spurgeon: The meek will be HUMBLE, GENTLE, PATIENT, FORGIVING, & CONTENT in God's providence.**

➤ **What & Who are NOT biblical meekness?**

***Meekness is NOT weakness... it is strength under control!***

Meekness is not cowardice or emotional flabbiness.

**MEEKNESS IS THE OPPOSITE  
OF VIOLENCE AND VENGEANCE.**

**NOTE:** We must also consider who/what is NOT meek...

- **NOT the self-righteous PHARISEES**
- **NOT the materialistic/worldly SADDUCEES**
- **NOT the isolating & hidden ESSENES/MONKS**
- **NOT the violent, blood-taking ZEALOTS**
- **NOT the lukewarm, superficial FOLLOWERS**

**MEEKNESS IS NOT LACK OF CONVICTION  
NOR MERE HUMAN NICENESS.**

**WHEN HIS FATHER'S HOUSE WAS PROFANED BY  
MONEYCHANGERS AND SACRIFICE SELLERS, "HE  
MADE A SCOURGE OF CORDS, AND DROVE THEM ALL  
OUT OF THE TEMPLE, WITH THE SHEEP AND THE  
OXEN; AND HE POURED OUT THE COINS OF THE  
MONEYCHANGERS, AND OVERTURNED THEIR  
TABLES" (JOHN 2:14–15). JESUS SCATHINGLY AND  
REPEATEDLY DENOUNCED THE HYPOCRITICAL AND  
WICKED RELIGIOUS LEADERS; HE TWICE CLEANSED  
THE TEMPLE BY FORCE; AND HE FEARLESSLY  
UTTERED DIVINE JUDGMENT ON THOSE WHO  
FORSOOK AND CORRUPTED GOD'S WORD. BUT  
JESUS DID NOT ONCE RAISE A FINGER OR GIVE A  
SINGLE RETORT IN HIS OWN DEFENSE.**

He could have called legions of angels to His side

**(Matt. 26:53)**

**MEEKNESS IS POWER**  
**COMPLETELY SURRENDERED TO GOD'S CONTROL.**

The idea of a meek Messiah leading meek people was far from any of their concepts of the messianic kingdom.

**The Jews understood military power and miracle power.**  
**But they did not understand the power of meekness.**

Jesus' teaching seemed new and unacceptable to most of His hearers simply because the Old Testament was so greatly neglected and misinterpreted.

[We see the same principled truth today! – JDP]

**IN THEIR MINDS JESUS COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE THE MESSIAH, AND THE FINAL EVIDENCE WAS HIS CRUCIFIXION.**

The people as a whole eventually rejected Jesus because He did not fulfill their messianic expectations. He even preached against the means in which they had put their hope. They first rejected, then hated, and finally killed Him because, instead of approving their religion He condemned it...

How could a Messiah who taught for a few years, accomplished absolutely nothing as far as anyone could see, and then was rejected by the religious teachers and put to death be worth believing in? (cf. Acts 3:17–18).

But rejection of Jesus started long before His crucifixion. When He began the Sermon on the Mount by teaching humility, mourning, and meekness, the people sensed something was wrong. This strange preacher could hardly be the deliverer they were looking for. Great causes are fought by the proud, not the humble. You cannot win victories while mourning, and you certainly could never conquer Rome with meekness...

The Jews were not looking for the Messiah that God had told them was coming. They disregarded such parts of His Word as Isaiah 40–60, which so clearly and vividly portrays the Messiah as the Suffering Servant as well as the conquering Lord. They could not accept the idea that such descriptions as, “He has no stately form or majesty.... He was despised and forsaken of men.... He was oppressed and He was afflicted ... like a lamb that is led to slaughter ... that He was cut off out of the land of the living,” and “His grave was assigned with wicked men” (Isa. 53:2–3, 7–9) could apply to the Messiah, to the coming great deliverer of the Jews.

*“Everyone loves Jesus until they realize what He really said.”*

– Platt

## II. God's BLESSING

*for they shall inherit the land/earth.*

*for they...*

\*\*\* The emphatic pronoun (they) is used (see vv. 3, 4)... indicating only those who are meek **shall inherit the earth.**

**VIDEO:** *Meekness & Rodeos (2X)*

*...shall inherit the land/earth.*

**INHERITANCE:** (Baker's Theological Dictionary)

The Scriptures transform the concept of inheritance to include the acquisition of spiritual blessings and promises from God. In the theological sense... to inherit is to "receive an irrevocable gift" with an emphasis on the special relationship between the benefactor and the recipients.

The focus of the inheritance concept in the Old Testament is God's promise to Abraham. The land of Canaan was bequeathed to him and his descendants as an eternal possession ( [Gen 12:7](#) ).

As the biblical history of Israel unfolds, the promised inheritance specifies a righteous remnant who will inherit the world as an everlasting possession ( [Ps. 2:8](#) ; [Isa. 54:3](#) ; [Dan. 7:14](#) ).

### *What Is the Inheritance?*

Throughout the New Testament, a striking promise for believers is simply "the inheritance" ( [Acts 20:32](#) ; [26:18](#) ; [Ephesians 1:14](#) [Ephesians 1:18](#) ; [Col 3:24](#) ). Generally, the promise refers to the possession of salvation ( [Heb 1:14](#) ). The believer's inheritance is described more specifically as eternal and joyful existence with God. Believers are promised "an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you" ( [1 Peter 1:4](#) ). Inheriting the "world to come" is a guarantee for all those who belong to God's family.

**The apostle Paul employs the inheritance metaphor more than any other New Testament writer. For him, the object of the inheritance is the kingdom of God. He never states exactly what constitutes the believer's inheritance of the kingdom, but asserts emphatically that unbelievers will not inherit the kingdom ( [1 Cor 6:9-10](#) ; [Gal 5:21](#) ; [Eph 5:5](#) ).**

*The Bible is clear that inheriting eternal life is synonymous with entering the kingdom. At the judgment, the righteous will inherit the kingdom ( [Matt 25:34](#) ) but the wicked will be eternally tormented ( [Matt 25:46](#) )...*

*The concept of the believer's inheritance highlights the dignity of the family relationship of the believer in Christ. No higher position or greater wealth can an individual acquire than to become an heir of God through faith in Christ. [William E. Brown](#)*

## **SEE GOD'S WORD...**

### **[Ephesians 1:11](#)**

***"In [Christ] we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will."***

***"Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory"***  
**[\(Romans 8:17\)](#)**

***"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all"***  
**[\(2 Corinthians 4:17\)](#)**.

**[Revelation 21:4](#) ...our inheritance: "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." God and man will dwell together.**

# III. God's BUILDING

- A. Jesus is building a **blueprint!**
- B. Jesus is building **Body!**
- C. Jesus is building **His bullseye!**

**VIDEO:** *Meekness per Spurgeon*

## MacArthur Quote:

*The blessings of the Beatitudes are for those who are realistic about their sinfulness, who are repentant of their sins, and who are responsive to God in His righteousness.*

*Those who are unblessed, unhappy, and shut out of the kingdom are the proud, the arrogant, the unrepentant—the self-sufficient and self-righteous who see in themselves no unworthiness and feel no need for God's help and God's righteousness...*

*Most of Jesus' hearers, like fallen men throughout history, were concerned about justifying their own ways, defending their own rights, and serving their own ends. The way of meekness was not their way, and therefore the true kingdom was not their kingdom.*

Our responsibility is  
to trust the Lord and obey His will.

## REVIEW:

***The Messiah's meek are blessed  
to BE The Shepherd's sheep,  
complete with His Gospel's guarantees!***

Biblical meekness is mighty & missional!

## CLOSE:

**Our meekness will be tested... tempted and persecuted...**  
but as **Spurgeon** said in His sermon on this text:

***"The anvil stands still, while the hammer beats upon it...  
BUT... ONE anvil... wears out many hammers!"***

**VIDEO:** *I Stand By The Door*

Think about Christ... ***"Consider Him..."*** (Heb. 12:3a)

During His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus was  
hailed as the coming King, though He was "gentle,  
and mounted on a donkey" (Matt. 21:5).

# PRAYER

# Study Notes:

## ◀ Matthew 5:5 ▶

### Text Analysis

[Go to Parallel Greek](#)

Strong's	Greek	English	Morphology
<a href="#">3107</a> [e]	Μακάριοι <a href="#">makarioi</a>	Blessed	<a href="#">Adj-NMP</a>
<a href="#">3588</a> [e]	οἱ <a href="#">hoi</a>	the	<a href="#">Art-NMP</a>
<a href="#">4239</a> [e]	πραεῖς, <a href="#">praeis</a>	meek,	<a href="#">Adj-NMP</a>
<a href="#">3754</a> [e]	Ὅτι <a href="#">hoti</a>	for	<a href="#">Conj</a>
<a href="#">846</a> [e]	αὐτοὶ <a href="#">autoi</a>	they	<a href="#">PPro-NM3P</a>
<a href="#">2816</a> [e]	κληρονομήσουσιν <a href="#">klēronomēsousin</a>	will inherit	<a href="#">V-FIA-3P</a>
<a href="#">3588</a> [e]	τὴν <a href="#">tēn</a>	the	<a href="#">Art-AFS</a>
<a href="#">1093</a> [e]	γῆν. <a href="#">gēn</a>	earth.	<a href="#">N-AFS</a>

## ◀ 4239. praus ▶

### Strong's Lexicon

praus: Meek, gentle, humble

**Original Word:** πρᾶϋς

**Part of Speech:** Adjective

**Transliteration:** praus

**Pronunciation:** prah-oos'

**Phonetic Spelling:** (prah-ooce')

**Definition:** Meek, gentle, humble

**Meaning:** mild, gentle.

**Word Origin:** Derived from the root word **πραΰτης (prautēs)**, meaning "gentleness" or "meekness."

**Corresponding Greek / Hebrew Entries:** - **H6035 (אָנָו, anav):** Often translated as "meek" or "humble," used in contexts such as Numbers 12:3, describing Moses as "very humble, more than any man on the face of the earth."

**Usage:** The Greek word "praus" is often translated as "meek" or "gentle" in English. **It describes a quality of character that is marked by humility and a gentle spirit.** In the New Testament, "praus" is used to depict an attitude of submission to God's will, a willingness to endure injury with patience and without resentment, and a gentle approach towards others. It is not to be confused with weakness; rather, it is strength under control.

**Cultural and Historical Background:** **In the Greco-Roman world, meekness was not typically considered a virtue.**

*The culture often valued power, dominance, and assertiveness.*

**However, in the biblical context, meekness is a highly esteemed quality, reflecting the character of Christ Himself.**

It is associated with a deep trust in God and a commitment to His ways, even in the face of adversity.

### HELPS Word-studies

Cognate: 4239 *pray's* (also listed as 4239a/*praupathia* in NAS dictionary) – meek. [See 4236](#) (*praótēs*).

**THIS DIFFICULT-TO-TRANSLATE ROOT (PRA-) MEANS *MORE THAN "MEEK."***

*Biblical meekness is not weakness but rather refers to exercising God's strength under His control – i.e. demonstrating power without undue harshness.*

**[The *English* term "meek" often lacks this *blend* –  
i.e. of *gentleness (reserve) and strength.*]**

STRONGS NT 4239: πραῦς

πραῦς, see [πραῖός](#).

### Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

meek.

Apparently a primary word; mild, i.e. (by implication) humble -- meek. See also [praios](#).

see GREEK [praios](#)

## ◀ 2816. kléronomeó ▶

### Strong's Lexicon

kléronomeó: To inherit, to receive an inheritance, to be an heir

**Original Word:** κληρονομέω

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** kléronomeó

**Pronunciation:** klay-ron-om-eh'-o

**Phonetic Spelling:** (klay-ron-om-eh'-o)

**Definition:** To inherit, to receive an inheritance, to be an heir

**Meaning:** I inherit, obtain (possess) by inheritance, acquire.

**Word Origin:** From the Greek words κληῖρος (kléros, meaning "lot" or "inheritance") AND νέμομαι (nemomai, meaning "to possess" or "to distribute").

**Corresponding Greek / Hebrew Entries:** - נָחַל (nachal) - Strong's Hebrew 5157: **To inherit, to possess**

- יָרַשׁ (yarash) - Strong's Hebrew 3423: To inherit, to take possession

**Usage:** The verb κληρονομέω primarily means "to inherit" or "to receive an inheritance." **It is used in the New Testament to describe the act of receiving something as an heir, often in a spiritual or eschatological context.**

This term is frequently associated with the inheritance of the Kingdom of God, eternal life, or the promises made to the patriarchs.

**It conveys the idea of receiving a portion or share that is rightfully designated to an heir.**

## **Cultural and Historical Background:**

In the ancient Greco-Roman world, inheritance was a significant aspect of family and social structure. It involved the transfer of property, titles, or positions from one generation to the next, typically from father to son.

In Jewish culture, inheritance was also deeply rooted in the covenantal promises made by God to Abraham and his descendants.

The concept of inheritance in the Bible extends beyond material possessions to include spiritual blessings and the fulfillment of God's promises.

**Cognate:** 2816 *klēronoméō* (from 2818 /*klēronómos*, "a specific allotment of inheritance, apportioned by casting lots") – properly, to assign inheritance (inherit) by *lot*.

See 2818 (*klēronomos*) for more discussion on *sonship* and *inheritance*.

2816 /*klēronoméō* ("to assign inheritance by lot-casting") is used in relation to believers claiming their *earthly inheritance* assigned (allotted) by the Lord.

[The believer receives their opportunity and reward for inheritance by divine-lot (cf. Eph 1:11, Gk text), which apportions the possessions of the Father for their gift of inheritance.]

## NAS Exhaustive Concordance

### Word Origin

from [kléronomos](#)

### Definition

to inherit

### NASB Translation

heir (1), inherit (16), inherited (1).

## Thayer's Greek Lexicon

### STRONGS NT 2816: κληρονομέω

κληρονομέω, κληρονόμω; future κληρονομήσω; 1 aorist ἐκληρονόμησα; perfect κεκληρονόμηκα; (κληρονόμος, which see; cf. οἰκονόμος); the Sept. for לָקַח and much more often for וָרַח;

1. "to receive a lot, receive by lot; especially to receive a part of an inheritance, receive as an inheritance, obtain by right of inheritance"; so, particularly in the Attic orators, with a genitive of the thing; in later writings not infrequent with an accusative of the thing (cf. Lob. ad Phryn., p. 129; Sturz, De dial. Maced. etc., p. 140; Winers Grammar, 200 (188); (Buttmann, § 132, 8)); absolutely, **to be an heir, to inherit:** [Galatians 4:30](#) from [Genesis 21:10](#).

2. universally, "to receive the portion assigned to one, receive an allotted portion, receive as one's own or as a possession; to become partaker of, to obtain" (cf. English **inherit**)

(as **φημην**, Polybius 18, 38 (55), 8; **τήν ἐπ' εὐσέβεια δόξαν**, 15, 22, 3); in Biblical Greek everywhere with the accusative of the thing; so very frequent in the O. T. in the phrase **κληρονομουν γῆν** and **τήν γῆν**, of the occupation of the land of Canaan by the Israelites, as [Leviticus 20:24](#); [Deuteronomy 4:22, 26](#); [Deuteronomy 6:1](#), etc. But as the Israelites after taking possession of the land were harassed almost perpetually by their hostile neighbors, and even driven out of the country for a considerable period, it came to pass that the phrase was transferred to denote the tranquil and stable possession of the holy land crowned with all divine blessings, an experience which pious Israelites were to expect under the Messiah: [Psalm 24:13](#) (); [Psalm 36:9, 11, 22, 29, 34](#) () Alex.; [Isaiah 60:21](#); Tobit 4:12; **ἐκ δευτέρας κληρονομήσουσι τήν γῆν**, [Isaiah 61:7](#); hence, it became a formula denoting to **partake of eternal salvation in the Messiah's kingdom**: [Matthew 5:5](#) (4) (from [Psalm 36:11](#) ()), where see Bleek. **ζωὴν αἰώνιον**, [Matthew 19:29](#); [Mark 10:17](#); [Luke 10:25](#); [Luke 18:18](#); **τήν βασιλείαν**, [Matthew 25:34](#); **βασιλείαν Θεοῦ**, [1 Corinthians 6:9](#); [1 Corinthians 15:50](#); [Galatians 5:21](#); **σωτηρίαν**, [Hebrews 1:14](#); **τάς ἐπαγγελίας**, [Hebrews 6:12](#); **ἀφθαρσίαν**, [1 Corinthians 15:50](#); **ταῦτα** (Rec. **πάντα**), [Revelation 21:7](#); **ὄνομα**, [Hebrews 1:4](#); **τήν εὐλογίαν**, [Hebrews 12:17](#); [1 Peter 3:9](#). (Compare: **κατα(κληρονομέω)**.)

## Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

to inherit

From [kleronomos](#); to be an heir to (literally or figuratively) -- be heir, (obtain by) inherit(-ance).

see GREEK [kleronomos](#)

## ◀ 1093. gé ▶

### Strong's Lexicon

gé: Earth, land, ground, soil

**Original Word:** γῆ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Feminine

**Transliteration:** gé

**Pronunciation:** gay

**Phonetic Spelling:** (ghay)

**Definition:** **Earth, land, ground, soil**

**Meaning:** the earth, soil, land, region, country, inhabitants of a region.

**Word Origin:** A primary word

**Corresponding Greek / Hebrew Entries:** - H776 (אֶרֶץ, erets): Often translated as "earth" or "land," similar in usage to γῆ.

- H127 (אֲדָמָה, adamah): Refers to ground or soil, **emphasizing the physical aspect of earth.**

**Usage:** The Greek word "γῆ" (gé) is commonly used in the New Testament to refer to the physical earth or land. **It can denote the entire planet, a specific region or country, or the ground itself.**

The term is often used in both literal and metaphorical contexts, such as the physical earth in creation narratives or symbolically to represent the people or nations.

## **Cultural and Historical Background:**

*In the ancient Near Eastern context, the concept of "earth" or "land" was deeply significant.*

**Land was not only a physical resource but also a divine inheritance and a sign of God's promise, especially to the Israelites.**

The land was central to identity, sustenance, and covenantal blessings. In the Greco-Roman world, the earth was also

seen as a fundamental element of the cosmos, often personified in mythology.

## HELPS Word-studies

1093 *gḗ* – properly, the physical earth; (figuratively) the "arena" we live in which operates in *space and time* which God uses to prepare us for *eternity*.

The physical earth ([1093](#) /*gḗ*) is the *temporary, probationary place* to live out moral preferences "through the body," i.e. as *free moral agents* (cf. [2 Cor 5:1-10](#)). In this way, God makes an eternal record of everything we do on the earth.

**THROUGH FAITH, EACH SCENE OF LIFE BECOMES EQUALLY, ETERNALLY SIGNIFICANT (CF. MT 13:31,32, 17:20; CF. ALSO LK 16:10; LK 17:6; 2 PET 1:1).**

[The OT Hebrew term, [776](#) /*asitia* ("earth"), also refers to the physical earth as "God's arena" – "the physical theater" in which our *eternal destiny* freely plays out.]

## NAS Exhaustive Concordance

### Word Origin

a prim. word

### Definition

the earth, land

### NASB Translation

country (2), earth (165), earthly (1), ground (20), land (46), soil (16).

## Thayer's Greek Lexicon

### STRONGS NT 1093: γῆ

γῆ, genitive γῆς, ἡ (contracted from γεα, poetic γαῖα), the Sept. very often for גַּרְדֵּי and אֶרֶץ, **earth**;

**1. arable land:** [Matthew 13:5, 8, 23](#); [Mark 4:8, 20, 26, 28, 31](#); [Luke 13:7](#); [Luke 14:35](#) (34); [John 12:24](#); [Hebrews 6:7](#); [James 5:7](#); [Revelation 9:4](#); of the earthy material out of which a thing is formed, with the implied idea of frailty and weakness: [ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός](#), [1 Corinthians 15:47](#).

**2. the ground, the earth** as a standing-place (German Boden): [Matthew 10:29](#); [Matthew 15:35](#); [Matthew 23:35](#); [Matthew 27:51](#); [Mark 8:6](#); [Mark 9:20](#); [Mark 14:35](#); [Luke 22:44](#) (L brackets WH reject the passage); ; [John 8:6, 8](#) (i. e. Rec.); [Acts 9:4, 8](#).

**3. the main land**, opposed to sea or water: [Mark 4:1](#); [Mark 6:47](#); [Luke 5:3](#); [Luke 8:27](#); [John 6:21](#); [John 21:8f, 11](#); [Revelation 12:12](#).

**4. the earth** as a whole, **the world** (Latinterrarumorbis);

**a. the earth as opposed to the heavens:** [Matthew 5:18, 35](#); [Matthew 6:10](#); [Matthew 16:19](#); [Matthew 18:18](#); [Matthew 24:35](#); [Mark 13:31](#); [Luke 2:14](#); [John 12:32](#); [Acts 2:19](#); [Acts 4:24](#); [2 Peter 3:5, 7, 10, 13](#); [Revelation 21:1](#); [τά ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς](#) the things and beings that are on the earth, [Ephesians 1:10](#); [Colossians 1:16](#) (T WH omit; L Tr brackets [τά](#)); involving a suggestion of mutability, frailty, infirmity, alike in thought and in action, [Matthew 6:19](#); [τά ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς](#) (equivalent to [τά ἐπίγεια](#), [Philippians 3:19](#)) terrestrial goods, pleasures, honors, [Colossians 3:2](#) (opposed to [τά ἄνω](#)); [τά μέλη ὑμῶν τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς](#) the members of your earthly body, as it were the abode and instruments of corrupt desires, [Colossians 3:5](#); [ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς γῆς ... λαλεῖ](#) (in contrast with Christ as having come from heaven) he who is of earthly (human) origin, has an earthly nature, and speaks as his earthly origin and nature prompt, [John 3:31](#).

**b. the inhabited earth**, the abode of men and animals: [Luke 21:35](#); [Acts 1:8](#); [Acts 10:12](#); [Acts 11:6](#); [Acts 17:26](#); [Hebrews 11:13](#); [Revelation 3:10](#); [αἴρειν ζωὴν τίνος](#) or [τινα ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς](#), [Acts 8:33](#); [Acts 22:22](#); [κληρονομεῖν τὴν γῆν](#) (see [κληρονομέω](#), 2), [Matthew 5:5](#) (4); [πῦρ βάλλειν ἐπὶ](#) (Rec. [εἰς](#)) [τὴν γῆν](#), i. e. among men, [Luke 12:49](#), cf. [Luke 12:51](#) and [Matthew 10:34](#); [ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς](#) among men, [Luke 18:8](#); [John 17:4](#).

**5. a country, land enclosed within fixed boundaries, a tract of land, territory, region;** simply, when it is plain from the context what land is meant, as that of the Jews: [Luke 4:25](#); [Luke 21:23](#); [Romans 9:28](#); [James 5:17](#); with a gentile noun added (then, as a rule,

anarthrous, Winer's Grammar, 121 (114f)): γῆ Ἰσραήλ, [Matthew 2:20f](#); Ἰουδα, [Matthew 2:6](#); Γεννησαρέτ, [Matthew 14:34](#); [Mark 6:53](#); Σοδομων καί Γομόρρων, [Matthew 10:15](#); [Matthew 11:24](#); Χαλδαίων, [Acts 7:4](#); Αἴγυπτος (see Αἴγυπτος); ἡ Ἰουδαία γῆ, [John 3:22](#); with the addition of an adjective: ἀλλότρια, [Acts 7:6](#); ἐκείνη, [Matthew 9:26, 31](#); with the genitive of person **one's country**, native land, [Acts 7:3](#).

## Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

country, ground, land, world.

Contracted from a primary word; soil; by extension a region, or the solid part or the whole of the terrene globe (including the occupants in each application) -- country, earth(-ly), ground, land, world.

## Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers

(5) **The meek.**—The word so rendered was probably used by St. Matthew in its popular meaning, without any reference to the definition which ethical writers had given of it, but it may be worth while to recall Aristotle's account of it (*Eth. Nicom.* v. 5) as the character of one who has the passion of resentment under control, and who is therefore **tranquil and untroubled**, as in part determining the popular use of the word, and in part also explaining the beatitude.

**They shall inherit the earth.**—The words may be partly allusive to the "kingdom of the saints of the Most High" in that prophecy of Daniel ([Daniel 7:27](#)) which had done so much to fashion the Messianic expectations of the time. They have, however, a wider and continuous fulfilment.

The influence of the meek and self-controlled is in the long-run greater than that of the impulsive and passionate.

Their serenity helps them to find the maximum of true joy in all conditions of life; for

*to the meek, the earth is not a stage for self-assertion and the graspings of desire, but an “inheritance” which they have received from their Father.*

Many of the best MSS. invert the order of [Matthew 5:4-5](#), and this arrangement has, at all events, the merit of bringing out the latent antithesis between the kingdom of heaven in its unseen greatness and the visible inheritance of the earth.

## **Benson Commentary**

[Matthew 5:5](#). *Blessed* [or *happy*] *are the meek* —

**Persons of a mild, gentle, long-suffering, and forgiving disposition**, who are **slow to anger, and averse from wrath; not easily provoked**, and if at any time at all provoked, soon pacified; who **never resent an injury, nor return evil for evil**; but make it their care to **overcome evil with good**; who by the sweetness, affability, courteousness, and kindness of their disposition, **endeavor to reconcile such as may be offended, and to win them over to peace and love.**

*For they shall inherit the earth* —

Whatever happiness can be enjoyed here below shall be their portion. They may not indeed be advanced to honour or affluence; nor can they expect to be without troubles in this fallen world, subjected as it is to vanity and misery for the sin of man; but the calamities of life, and the various afflictions and trials which they meet with, being received with a quiet spirit, a resigned, patient, and contented mind, are hardly

felt, while the blessings of Providence, through the gratitude they feel for them, are tasted and enjoyed in all their sweetness and comfort.

### **Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary**

5:3-12 Our Saviour here gives eight characters of blessed people, which represent to us the principal graces of a Christian. 1. The poor in spirit are happy. These bring their minds to their condition, when it is a low condition. They are humble and lowly in their own eyes. They see their want, bewail their guilt, and thirst after a Redeemer. The kingdom of grace is of such; the kingdom of glory is for them. 2. Those that mourn are happy. That godly sorrow which worketh true repentance, watchfulness, a humble mind, and continual dependence for acceptance on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, with constant seeking the Holy Spirit, to cleanse away the remaining evil, seems here to be intended. Heaven is the joy of our Lord; a mountain of joy, to which our way is through a vale of tears. Such mourners shall be comforted by their God. **3. The meek are happy. The meek are those who quietly submit to God; who can bear insult; are silent, or return a soft answer; who, in their patience, keep possession of their own souls, when they can scarcely keep possession of anything else. These meek ones are happy, even in this world. Meekness promotes wealth, comfort, and safety, even in this world.** 4. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are happy.

Righteousness is here put for all spiritual blessings. These are purchased for us by the righteousness of Christ, confirmed by the faithfulness of God. Our desires of spiritual blessings must be earnest. Though all desires for grace are not grace, yet such a desire as this, is a desire of God's own raising, and he will not forsake the work of his own hands. 5. The merciful are happy. We must not only bear our own afflictions patiently, but we must do all we can to help those who are in misery. We must have compassion on the souls of others, and help them; pity those who are in sin, and seek to snatch them as brands out of the burning. 6. The pure in heart are happy; for they shall see God. Here holiness and happiness are fully described and put together. The heart must be purified by faith, and kept for God. Create in me such a clean heart, O God. None but the pure are capable of seeing God, nor would heaven be happiness to the impure. As God cannot endure to look upon their iniquity, so they cannot look upon his purity. 7. The peace-makers are happy. They love, and desire, and delight in peace; and study to

be quiet. They keep the peace that it be not broken, and recover it when it is broken. If the peace-makers are blessed, woe to the peace-breakers! 8. Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are happy. This saying is peculiar to Christianity; and it is more largely insisted upon than any of the rest. Yet there is nothing in our sufferings that can merit of God; but God will provide that those who lose for him, though life itself, shall not lose by him in the end. Blessed Jesus! how different are thy maxims from those of men of this world! They call the proud happy, and admire the gay, the rich, the powerful, and the victorious. May we find mercy from the Lord; may we be owned as his children, and inherit his kingdom. With these enjoyments and hopes, we may cheerfully welcome low or painful circumstances.

## **Barnes' Notes on the Bible**

The meek - **Meekness is patience in the reception of injuries.**

It is neither meanness nor a surrender of our rights, nor cowardice; **but it is the opposite of sudden anger, of malice, of long-harbored vengeance.**

Christ insisted on his right when he said, "If I have done evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" [John 18:23](#). Paul asserted his right when he said, "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves, and fetch us out," [Acts 16:37](#).

And yet **Christ was the very model of meekness**. It was one

of his characteristics, ***"I am meek,"*** [Matthew 11:29](#).

So, of Paul. No man endured more wrong, or endured it more patiently than he. Yet the Saviour and the apostle were not passionate. They bore all patiently. **They did not press their rights through thick and thin, or trample down the rights of others to secure their own... Meekness is the reception of**

injuries with a belief that God will vindicate us.  
**"Vengeance is his; he will repay,"** [Romans 12:19](#).

It little becomes us to take his place, and to do what he has promised to do.

**Meekness produces peace...** It is proof of true greatness of soul. **It comes from a heart too great to be moved by little insults.** It looks upon those who offer them with pity.

*He that is constantly ruffled; that suffers every little insult or injury to throw him off his guard and to raise a storm of passion within, is at the mercy of every mortal that chooses to disturb him.*

He is like "the troubled sea that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."

***They shall inherit the earth*** –

**This might have been translated the land.**

It is probable that here is a reference to the manner in which the Jews commonly expressed themselves to denote any great blessing. It was promised to them that they should inherit the land of Canaan. For a long time the patriarchs looked forward to this, [Genesis 15:7-8](#); [Exodus 32:13](#).

They regarded it as a great blessing. It was so spoken of in the journey in the wilderness, and **their hopes were crowned when they took possession of the promised land, [Deuteronomy 1:38](#); [Deuteronomy 16:20](#).**

**In the time of our Saviour they were in the constant habit of using the Old Testament, where this promise perpetually occurs, and they used it "as a proverbial expression to denote any great blessing, perhaps as the sum of all blessings," [Psalm 37:20](#); [Isaiah 60:21](#).**

**OUR SAVIOUR USED IT IN THIS SENSE, AND MEANT TO SAY, NOT THAT THE MEEK WOULD OWN GREAT PROPERTY OR HAVE MANY LANDS, BUT THAT THEY WOULD POSSESS SPECIAL BLESSINGS.**

The Jews also considered the land of Canaan as a type of heaven, and of the blessings under the Messiah. To inherit the land became, therefore, an expression denoting those blessings.

When our Savior uses this language here, he means that the meek shall be received into his kingdom, and partake of its blessings here, and of the glories of the heavenly Canaan hereafter.

**The value of meekness, even in regard to worldly property & success in life, is often exhibited in the Scriptures, [Proverbs 22:24-25](#); [Proverbs 15:1](#); [Proverbs 25:8](#), [Proverbs 25:15](#).**

**It is also seen in common life that a meek, patient, mild man is the most prospered.**

An impatient and quarrelsome man raises up enemies; often loses property in lawsuits; spends his time in disputes and broils rather than in sober, honest industry; and is harassed, vexed, and unsuccessful in all that he does. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," [1 Timothy 4:8](#). Compare [1 Timothy 6:3-6](#).

## **Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary**

### ***5. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth—***

**This promise to the meek is but a repetition of Ps 37:11;** only the word which our Evangelist renders "the meek," after the Septuagint, is the same which we have found so often translated "the poor," showing how closely allied these two features of character are. **It is impossible, indeed, that "the poor in spirit" and "the mourners" in Zion should not at the same time be "meek"; that is to say, persons of a lowly and gentle carriage.** How fitting, at least, it is that they should be so, may be seen by the following touching appeal: "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men: FOR WE OURSELVES WERE ONCE FOOLISH, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures ... But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared: ... according to His mercy He saved us," &c. (Tit 3:1-7). But He who had no such affecting reasons for manifesting this beautiful carriage, said, nevertheless, of Himself, ***"Take My yoke***

*upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt 11:29);*

and the apostle besought one of the churches by **"the meekness and gentleness of Christ"** (2 Cor. 10:1). In what esteem this is held by Him who seeth not as man seeth, we may learn from **1 Peter 3:4**, *where the true adorning is said to be that of "a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price."*

Towards men this disposition is the opposite of high-mindedness, and a quarrelsome and revengeful spirit; it "rather takes wrong, and suffers itself to be defrauded" (1Co 6:7); it "avenges not itself, but rather gives place unto wrath" (Ro 12:19); like the meek One, "when reviled, it reviles not again; when it suffers, it threatens not: but commits itself to Him that judgeth righteously" (1Pe 2:19-22).

"The earth" which the meek are to inherit might be rendered "the land"—bringing out the more immediate reference to Canaan as the promised land, the secure possession of which was to the Old Testament saints the evidence and manifestation of God's favor resting on them, and the ideal of all true and abiding blessedness. Even in the Psalm from which these words are taken the promise to the meek is not held forth as an arbitrary reward, but as having a kind of natural fulfilment. When they delight themselves in the Lord, He gives them the desires of their heart: when they commit their way to Him, He brings it to pass; bringing forth their righteousness as the light, and their judgment as the noonday: the little that they have, even when despoiled of their rights, is better than the riches of many wicked (Ps 37:1-24). All things, in short, are theirs—in the possession of that favor which is life, and of those rights which belong to them as the children of God—whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are theirs (1Co 3:21, 22); and at length, overcoming, they "inherit all things" (Re 21:7). Thus are **the meek the only rightful occupants of a foot of ground or a crust of bread here, and heirs of all coming things.**

## Matthew Poole's Commentary

Men count the hectors of the world happy, whom none can provoke but they must expect as good as they bring, *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*: but I tell you these are not truly happy; they are tortured with their own passions; as their hand is against every one, so every man's hand is against them; besides that there is a God, who will revenge the wrongs they do.

But **the meek**, who can be angry, but restrain their wrath in obedience to the will of God, and **will not be angry unless they can be angry and not sin; nor will easily be provoked by others**, but rather use soft words to pacify wrath, and give place to the passions of others; **these are the blessed men.**

For though others may by their sword and their bow conquer a great deal of the earth to their will and power, yet they will never quietly and comfortably inherit or possess it; they are possessors *malae fidei*, forcible possessors, and they will enjoy what they have, as rapacious birds enjoy theirs, loudly, every one hath his gun ready charged and cocked against them; but those who are of meek and quiet spirits, though they may not take so deep root in the earth as others more boisterous, yet they shall enjoy what God giveth them with more quiet and certainty; and God will provide for them, verily they shall be fed, Psalm 37:3,11.

## Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

***Blessed are the meek...***

Who are **not easily provoked to anger**; who **patiently bear, and put up with injuries and affronts; carry themselves courteously, and affably to all**; have the meanest thoughts of themselves, and the best of others; **do not envy the gifts and**

graces of other men; are willing to be instructed and admonished, by the meanest of the saints; quietly submit to the will of God, in adverse dispensations of providence; and ascribe all they have, and are, to the grace of God.

Meekness, or humility, is very valuable and commendable. The Jews, though a proud, haughty, and wrathful people, cannot but speak in its praise:

"Wisdom, fear, and meekness, say (b) they, are of high esteem; but "meekness", is greater than them all."

They had two very considerable doctors in the time of Christ, Hillell and Shammai; the one was of a meek, the other of an angry disposition: hence, say they (c),

"Let a man be always meek as Hillell, and let him not be angry as Shammai."

Here meekness is to be considered, not as a moral virtue, but as a Christian grace, a fruit of the Spirit of God; which was eminently in Christ, and is very ornamental to believers; and of great advantage and use to them, in hearing and receiving the word; in giving an account of the reason of the hope that is in them; in instructing and restoring such, who have backslidden, either in principle or practice; and in the whole of their lives and conversations; and serves greatly to recommend religion to others: such who are possessed of it, and exercise it, are well pleasing to God;

...when disconsolate, he comforts them; when hungry, he satisfies them; when they want direction, he gives it to them; when wronged, he will do them right; he gives them more grace here, and glory hereafter. The blessing instanced, in which they shall partake of, is,

***they shall inherit the earth...***

not the land of Canaan, though that may be alluded to; nor this world, at least in its present situation; for this is not the saints' rest and inheritance: but rather, the "new earth", which will be after this is burnt up; in which only such persons as are here described shall dwell; and who shall inherit it, by virtue of their being heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof.

Though some think heaven is here designed, and is so called, partly for the sake of variety of expression, from [Matthew 5:3](#) and partly in allusion to the land of Canaan, a type of it; and may be called an earth, or country, that is an heavenly one, in opposition to this earthly one; as the heavenly Jerusalem is opposed to the earthly one, and which will be a glorious inheritance. **The passage, referred to is [Psalm 37:11](#).**

## Meyer's NT Commentary

[Matthew 5:5](#). According to [Psalm 37:11](#), where the LXX. have οἱ δὲ πραεῖς κληρονομήσουσι γῆν. The πραεῖς ([Matthew 11:29](#), [Matthew 21:5](#)) are the *calm, meek sufferers* relying on God's help, who, without bitterness or revenge as the ταπεινοὶ κ. ἡσύχιοι ([Isaiah 66:2](#)), suffer the cruelties of their tyrants and oppressors. The opposite is χαλεποὶ (Plat. *Pol.* vi. p. 493 B), πικροὶ (Dem. 315, 5), ἄγριοι, and the like; Plat. *Def.* p. 412 D: πραότης κατάστασις κινήσεως τῆς ὑπ' ὀργῆς· κρᾶσις ψυχῆς σύμμετρος. Comp. [1 Peter 3:4](#). The very ancient popular ([Genesis 15:7](#) f.) theocratic conception: *to come into possession of the land* (of Palestine) (in Psalms 37 : after the expulsion of their haughty enemies), has been raised to its antitypical Christian idea, so that *the Messiah's kingdom* and the receiving possession of it is intended. Comp. on [Galatians 3:18](#); [Ephesians 1:11](#).

## Expositor's Greek Testament

[Matthew 5:5](#). οἱ πραεῖς: in Sept[18] for עָנָוִים in [Psalm 37:11](#), of which this Beatitude is an echo. The **men who suffer wrong without bitterness or desire for revenge**, a class who in this world are apt to go to the wall. In this case we should have expected the Teacher to end with the common refrain: theirs is the kingdom of heaven, that being the only thing they are likely to get. Jean Paul Richter humorously said: "The French have the empire of the land, the English the empire of the sea; to the Germans belongs the empire of the *air*". But Jesus promises to the meek the empire of the solid earth—κληρονομήσουσι τὴν γῆν.

## Surely a startling paradox!

**THAT THE MEEK SHOULD FIND A FOREMOST PLACE IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS VERY INTELLIGIBLE, BUT "INHERIT THE EARTH"—THE LAND OF CANAAN OR ANY OTHER PART OF THIS PLANET—IS IT NOT A DELUSIVE PROMISE? NOT ALTOGETHER. IT IS AT LEAST TRUE AS A DOCTRINE OF MORAL TENDENCY. MEEKNESS AFTER ALL IS A POWER EVEN IN THIS WORLD, A "WORLD-CONQUERING PRINCIPLE" (THOLUCK).**

The meek of England, driven from their native land by religious intolerance, have inherited the continent of America. Weiss (Meyer) is quite sure, however, that this thought was far (*ganz fern*) from Christ's mind. I venture to think he is mistaken.

[18] Septuagint.

The inverse order of the second and third Beatitudes found in Codex [19], and favoured by some of the Fathers, *e.g.*, Jerome, might be plausibly justified by the affinity between poverty of spirit and meekness, and the natural sequence of the two promises: possession of the kingdom of heaven and inheritance of the earth. But the connection beneath the surface is in favour of the order as it stands in T. R.

## Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges

5. *the meek*] [Psalm 37:11](#). “But the meek shall inherit the earth.” See note [Matthew 5:3](#). Meekness is mentioned with very faint praise by the greatest of heathen moralists,

Aristotle. He calls it “a mean inclining to a defect.”  
It is indeed essentially a Christian virtue.

## Bengel's Gnomes

[Matthew 5:5](#). Οἱ πραεῖς, *the meek*) Those are here named...

for the most part, whom the world tramples on.

—πραῖος is connected with the Latin *pravus*, which has frequently the meaning of *segnis*, slow, sluggish, etc.—κληρονομήσουσι, *shall inherit*) the future.

The meek are seen everywhere to yield to the importunity of the inhabitants of the earth; and yet **THEY SHALL OBTAIN POSSESSION OF THE EARTH, NOT BY THEIR OWN ARM, BUT BY INHERITANCE,** through the aid of the Father: cf. [Revelation 5:10](#).

In the mean time, even whilst the usurpation of the ungodly continues, all the produce of the earth is ordered for the comfort of the meek. **In all these sentences, blessedness in heaven and blessedness on earth mutually imply each other.**

**See Psalms 37(36):11**,—Οἱ δὲ πραεῖς κληρονομήσουσι γῆν, καὶ κατατρυφήσουσιν ἐπὶ πλήθει ειρήνης, *But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.* **This is, indeed,**

**the subject of that whole Psalm**; see [Matthew 5:3](#); [Matthew 5:9](#); [Matthew 5:22](#); [Matthew 5:29](#); [Matthew 5:34](#)

## **Pulpit Commentary**

Verse 5. - **Blessed are the meek.** In this Beatitude our Lord still quotes Old Testament expressions. The phrase, "**shall inherit the earth,**" comes even in [Isaiah 60:21](#), only two verses before [Isaiah 61:1, 2](#), to which he has already referred.

In the present copies of the LXX. it is found also in [Isaiah 61:7](#), but there it is evidently a corruption. It occurs also in [Psalm 37:9, 11, 22, 29, 34](#); and since in the eleventh verse of the psalm it is directly said of the meek: "But the meek shall inherit the land (LXX., οἱ δὲ πραεῖς κληρονομήσουσιν γῆν)," it is, doubtless, from this latter passage that our Lord borrows the phrase. The meaning attributed by our Lord to the word **meek** is not clear. The ordinary use of the words *πραυ*"ς, *πραυ*"της, in the New Testament refers solely to the relation of men to men, and this is the sense in which οἱ πραεῖς is taken by most commentators here. But with this sense... taken barely and solely, there seems to be no satisfactory explanation of the position of the Beatitude.

**Vers. 3 and 4 refer to men in their relation to God; ver. 6, to say the least, includes the relation of men to God; what has ver. 5 to do here if it refers solely to the relation of men to men? It would have come very naturally either before or after ver. 9 ("the peacemakers"); but why here? The reason, however, for the position of the Beatitude lies in the true conception of meekness. While the thought is here primarily that of meekness exhibited towards men (as is evident from the implied contrast in they shall inherit the earth), yet meekness towards men is closely connected with, and is the result of, meekness towards God. This is not exactly humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη, which, as regards God, is equivalent to a sense of creatureliness or dependence; cf. Trench, 'Syn.,' § 42.). Meekness is rather the attitude of the soul towards another when that other is in a state of activity towards it. It is the attitude of the disciple to the teacher when teaching; of the son to the father when exercising his paternal authority; of the servant to the master when giving him orders. It is therefore essentially as applicable to the relation of man to God as to**

that of man to man. It is for this reason that we find ענוּ ענוּהָ very frequently used of man's relation to God, in fact, more often than of man's relation to man; and this common meaning of ענוּ must be specially remembered here, where the phrase is taken directly from the Old Testament.

Weiss ('Matthaus-ev.') objects to Tholuck adducing the evidence of the Hebrew words, on the ground that the Greek terms are used solely of the relation to man, and that this usage is kept to throughout the New Testament. But the latter statement is hardly true.

For, not to mention [Matthew 11:29](#), in which the reference is doubtful, **James 1:21** certainly refers to the meekness shown towards God in receiving his word.

"The Scriptural πραότης," says Trench, **loc. cit.**," is not in a man's outward behaviour only; nor yet in his relations to his fellow-men; as little in his mere natural disposition. Rather **(MEEKNESS) IS IT AN INWROUGHT GRACE OF THE SOUL; AND THE EXERCISES OF IT ARE FIRST AND CHIEFLY TOWARDS GOD (MATTHEW 11:29; JAMES 1:21). IT IS THAT TEMPER OF SPIRIT IN WHICH WE ACCEPT HIS DEALINGS WITH US AS GOOD, AND THEREFORE WITHOUT DISPUTING OR RESISTING; AND IT IS CLOSELY LINKED WITH THE ταπεινοφροσύνη, AND FOLLOWS DIRECTLY UPON IT (EPHESIANS 4:2; COLOSSIANS 3:12; CF. ZEPHANIAH 3:12), BECAUSE IT IS ONLY THE HUMBLE HEART WHICH IS ALSO THE MEEK; AND WHICH, AS SUCH, DOES NOT FIGHT AGAINST GOD, AND MORE OR LESS STRUGGLE AND CONTEND WITH HIM.**"

Yet, as this meekness must be felt towards God not only in his **direct** dealings with the soul, but also in his **indirect** dealings (i.e. by secondary means and agents), it must also be exhibited towards men.

Meekness towards God necessarily issues in meekness towards men.

Our Lord's concise teaching seizes, therefore, on this furthest expression of meekness. Thus, it is not meekness in the relation of man to man barely stated, of which Christ here speaks, but meekness in the relation of man to man, with its prior and presupposed fact of meekness in the relation of man to God.

Shall inherit the earth.

In the Psalm this is equivalent to the land of Palestine, and **THE PSALMIST MEANS THAT, THOUGH THE WICKED MAY HAVE TEMPORARY POWER, YET GOD'S TRUE SERVANTS SHALL REALLY AND FINALLY HAVE DOMINION IN THE LAND.**

But what is intended here? Probably our Lord's audience understood the phrase on his lips as a Messianic adaptation of the original meaning, and as therefore implying that those who manifested a meek reception of his will would obtain that full possession of the land of Palestine which was now denied to the Israelites through the conquest of the Romans.

But to our Lord, and to the evangelist who, years after, recorded them, the meaning of the words must have been much fuller, corresponding, in fact, to **THE TRUE MEANING OF THE "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN," VIZ. THAT THE MEEK SHALL INHERIT - SHALL RECEIVE, AS THEIR RIGHTFUL POSSESSION FROM THEIR FATHER, THE WHOLE EARTH; RENEWED, IT MAY BE (ISAIAH 11:6-9; ISAIAH 65:25; REVELATION 21:1), BUT STILL THE EARTH (ROMANS 8:21), WITH ALL THE POWERS OF NATURE THEREIN IMPLIED.**

Of this the conquest of nature already gained through the civilization produced under Christianity is at once the promise and, though but in a small degree, the firstfruits.  
Matthew 5:5

## Vincent's Word Studies

The meek (οἱ πραεῖς)

**Another word (meek/meekness)** which, though never used in a bad sense, **Christianity has lifted to a higher plane, and made the symbol of a higher good.** Its primary

meaning is mild, gentle. It was applied to inanimate things, as light, wind, sound, sickness. It was used of a horse; gentle.

As a human attribute, Aristotle defines it as the mean between stubborn anger and that negativeness of character which is inescapable of even righteous indignation: according to which it is tantamount to equanimity.

Plato opposes it to fierceness or cruelty, and uses it of humanity to the condemned; but also of the conciliatory demeanor of a demagogue seeking popularity and power.

Pindar applies it to a king, mild or kind to the citizens, and Herodotus uses it as opposed to anger.

These pre-Christian meanings of the word exhibit two general characteristics. **1.** They express outward conduct merely. **2.** They contemplate relations to men only.

***The Christian word, on the contrary, describes an inward quality, and that as related primarily to God.***

**The equanimity, mildness, kindness, represented by the classical word, are founded in self-control or in natural disposition.**

The Christian meekness is based on humility, which is not a natural quality but an outgrowth of a renewed nature.

To the pagan, the word often implied condescension,

## **TO THE CHRISTIAN IT IMPLIES SUBMISSION.**

The Christian quality, in its manifestation, reveals all that was best in the heathen virtue - mildness, gentleness, equanimity - but these manifestations toward men are emphasized as outgrowths of a spiritual relation to God. The mildness or kindness of Plato or Pindar imply no sense of inferiority in those who exhibit them; sometimes the contrary. Plato's demagogue is kindly from self-interest and as a means to tyranny. Pindar's king is condescendingly kind.

*The meekness of the Christian springs from a sense of the inferiority of the creature to the Creator, and especially of the sinful creature to the holy God.*

While, therefore, the pagan quality is redolent of self-assertion, **the Christian quality carries the flavor of self-abasement.**

As toward God, therefore, meekness accepts his dealings without murmur or resistance as absolutely good and wise. As toward man, it accepts opposition, insult, and provocation, as God's permitted ministers of a chastening demanded by the infirmity and corruption of sin; while, under this sense of his own sinfulness, the meek bears patiently "the contradiction of sinners against himself," forgiving and restoring the erring in a spirit of meekness, considering himself, lest he also be tempted (see Galatians 6:1-5).

The ideas of forgiveness and restoration nowhere attach to the classical word. They belong exclusively to Christian meekness, which thus shows itself allied to love. As ascribed by our Lord to himself, see [Matthew 11:29](#). Wyc. renders "Blessed be mild men."

## MacArthur Bible Commentary:

### Happy Are the Meek

(5:5)

*Blessed are the gentle/meek, for they shall inherit the earth.* (5:5)

Like the first two beatitudes, this one must have been shocking and perplexing to Jesus' hearers. He taught principles that were totally foreign to their thinking.

**Jesus' audience** knew how to act spiritually proud and spiritually self-sufficient.

They were proficient in erecting a pious facade.

They actually believed that the Messiah was coming soon and would commend them for their goodness... He would, at last, give the Jewish people their rightful place in the world—a position above all other people, because they were the chosen of God.

They eagerly anticipated that the Messiah would deal gently with them and harshly with their oppressors, who for nearly a hundred years had been the Romans. After the Maccabean revolution that freed them from Greece, the Jews had a brief time of independence. But Rome's rule, though not as cruel and destructive, was much more powerful than that of Greece. Since 63 B.C., when Pompey annexed Palestine to Rome, the region had been ruled primarily by puppet kings of the Herodian family and by Roman governors, or procurators, the best known of which to us was Pilate.

The Jews so despised Roman oppression that sometimes they even refused to admit it existed. One day as He taught on the Mount of Olives, Jesus had one of His strongest exchanges with the Pharisees. When He said "to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,'" the Pharisees' response was strange. "We are Abraham's offspring," they said, "and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You shall become free?'" (John 8:31–33). The fact was, of course, that Israel's history was one of repeated conquest and oppression—by Egypt, Assyria, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks, and, at that very time, Rome. Apparently pride would not allow those Pharisees to acknowledge one of the most obvious facts of their nation's history and of their present situation.

All Jews hoped for deliverance of some sort, by some means. Many were expecting deliverance to come through the Messiah. God had directly promised the godly Simeon "that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ," that is, the Messiah (Luke 2:26). Simeon's expectation was fulfilled when he was given the privilege of seeing the true Messiah as an infant. Others, however, such as [the Pharisees](#), **expected the Messiah to come with great fanfare and a mighty show of supernatural power. They assumed He would miraculously throw off the yoke of Rome and establish a Jewish state, a revived theocracy and holy commonwealth that would rule the world.**

Others, such as [the materialistic Sadducees](#), **hoped for change through political compromise, for which they were despised by many fellow Jews.**

[The monastic Essenes](#), **isolated both physically and philosophically from the rest of Judaism, lived largely as if Rome and the rest of the world did not exist.**

[The Zealots](#), **as their name implies, were the most vocal and active proponents of deliverance. Many of them expected the**

Messiah to come as a powerful, irresistible military leader who would conquer Rome in the same way that Rome had conquered them. They were not, however, waiting passively for their Deliverer, but were determined that, whenever and however He might come, they would do their part to make His job easier. Their numbers, influence, and power continued to grow until Rome brutally attempted to crush Jewish resistance.

In A.D. 70 Titus totally destroyed Jerusalem and massacred over a million Jews. Three years later Flavius Silva finally succeeded in his long siege against the stronghold at Masada. When Jewish rebelliousness continued to frustrate Rome, Hadrian swept through Palestine during the years 132–35 and systematically destroyed most of the cities and slaughtered the Jews living there.

In Jesus' day the aggressive, rebellious Zealots were not many in number, but they had the sympathy and moral support of many of the people, who wanted Rome to be overthrown, however it was done.

Consequently...

in whatever way various groups of people expected the Messiah to come, they did not anticipate His coming humbly and meekly.

Yet those were the very attitudes that Jesus, the one whom John the Baptist had announced as the Messiah, was both teaching and practicing. **The idea of a meek Messiah leading meek people was far from any of their concepts of the messianic kingdom.**

**The Jews understood military power and miracle power. They even understood the power of compromise,**

*unpopular as it was. But they did not understand the power of meekness.*

The people as a whole eventually rejected Jesus because He did not fulfill their messianic expectations. He even preached against the means in which they had put their hope. They first rejected, then hated, and finally killed Him because, instead of approving their religion He condemned it, and instead of leading them to independence from Rome He disdained revolutionary acts and offered a way of even greater subservience.

**IN THEIR MINDS JESUS COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE THE MESSIAH, AND THE FINAL EVIDENCE WAS HIS CRUCIFIXION.**

The Old Testament taught that anyone hanged on a tree was “accursed of God” (Deut. 21:23), yet that is exactly where Jesus’ life ended—ignominiously on a cross, and a Roman cross at that.

As He hung dying, some of the Jewish leaders could not resist a last taunt against His claim to be Savior and Messiah: “He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him. He trusts in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He takes pleasure in Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God’ ” (Matt. 27:42–43).

*In the early days of apostolic preaching, the death and resurrection of Christ were the greatest hindrances to belief in the gospel. The ideas were foolishness to Gentiles and a stumbling block to Jews (1 Cor. 1:23).*

The gospel was foolishness to those Gentiles who considered the body to be inherently evil and thought it absurd that the Savior of the world not only would allow Himself to be killed but would come back from the dead in bodily form. **To the Jews the gospel was a stumbling block because the idea of the Messiah dying at all, much less on a cross, was unthinkable.**

How could a Messiah who taught for a few years, accomplished absolutely nothing as far as anyone could see, and then was rejected by the religious teachers and put to death be worth believing in? (cf. Acts 3:17–18).

But rejection of Jesus started long before His crucifixion. When He began the Sermon on the Mount by teaching humility, mourning, and meekness, the people sensed something was wrong. This strange preacher could hardly be the deliverer they were looking for. Great causes are fought by the proud, not the humble. You cannot win victories while mourning, and you certainly could never conquer Rome with meekness. In spite of all the miracles of His ministry, the people never really believed in Him as the Messiah, because He failed to act in military or miracle power against Rome.

The Jews were not looking for the Messiah that God had told them was coming. They disregarded such parts of His Word as Isaiah 40–60, which so clearly and vividly portrays the Messiah as the Suffering Servant as well as the conquering Lord. They could not accept the idea that such descriptions as, “He has no stately form or majesty.... He was despised and forsaken of men.... He was oppressed and He was afflicted ... like a lamb that is led to slaughter ... that He was cut off out of the land of the living,” and “His grave was assigned with wicked men” (Isa. 53:2–3, 7–9) could apply to the Messiah, to the coming great deliverer of the Jews.

*Jesus’ teaching seemed new and unacceptable to most of His hearers simply because the Old Testament was so greatly neglected and misinterpreted.*

[We see the same principled truth today! –JDP]

[“Everyone loves Jesus until they realize what He really said.” – Platt]

They did not recognize the humble and self-denying Jesus as the Messiah because they did not recognize God's predicted Suffering Servant as the Messiah. That was not the kind of Messiah they wanted.

## THE MEANING OF MEEKNESS

**Gentle** is from *praos*, which basically means mild or soft. The term sometimes was used to describe a soothing medicine or a soft breeze.

It was used of colts and other animals whose naturally wild spirits were broken by a trainer so that they could do useful work.

**AS A HUMAN ATTITUDE IT MEANT BEING GENTLE OF SPIRIT, MEEK, SUBMISSIVE, QUIET, TENDERHEARTED.**

During His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus was hailed as the coming King, though He was "gentle, and mounted on a donkey" (Matt. 21:5). Paul lovingly referred to the "meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:1) as the pattern for his own attitude.

*The essential difference between being poor in spirit and being meek, or **gentle**, may be that **poverty in spirit** focuses on our sinfulness, **whereas** meekness focuses on God's holiness.*

The basic attitude of humility underlies both virtues. When we look honestly at ourselves, we are made humble by seeing how sinful and unworthy we are; when we look at God, we are made humble by seeing how righteous and worthy He is.

*We again can see logical sequence and progression in the Beatitudes. Poverty*

of spirit (the first) is negative, and results in mourning (the second). Meekness (the third) is positive, and results in seeking righteousness (the fourth). Being poor in spirit causes us to turn away from ourselves in mourning, and meekness causes us to turn toward God in seeking His righteousness.

THE BLESSINGS OF THE BEATITUDES ARE FOR THOSE WHO ARE REALISTIC ABOUT THEIR SINFULNESS, WHO ARE REPENTANT OF THEIR SINS, AND WHO ARE RESPONSIVE TO GOD IN HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. THOSE WHO ARE UNBLESSED, UNHAPPY, AND SHUT OUT OF THE KINGDOM ARE THE PROUD, THE ARROGANT, THE UNREPENTANT—THE SELF-SUFFICIENT AND SELF-RIGHTEOUS

**WHO SEE IN THEMSELVES NO  
UNWORTHINESS AND FEEL NO NEED  
FOR GOD'S HELP AND GOD'S  
RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

Most of Jesus' hearers, like fallen men throughout history, were concerned about justifying their own ways, defending their own rights, and serving their own ends. The way of meekness was not their way, and therefore the true kingdom was not their kingdom.

*The proud Pharisees wanted a miraculous kingdom, the proud Sadducees wanted a materialistic kingdom, the proud Essenes wanted a monastic kingdom, and the proud Zealots wanted a military kingdom. The humble Jesus offered a meek kingdom.*

## Meekness has always been God's way for man.

It is the way of the Old Testament. In the book of **Job** we are told that *God "sets on high those who are lowly, and those who mourn are lifted to safety" (5:11)*. Moses, the Jews' great deliverer and law-giver, "was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3). The Jews' great King David, their supreme military hero, wrote, *"He [the Lord] leads the humble injustice, and He teaches the humble His way" (Ps. 25:9)*.

Meekness is the way of the New Testament. It is taught by Jesus in the Beatitudes as well as elsewhere and is continued to be taught by the apostles. Paul entreated the Ephesians to *"walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love" (Eph. 4:1–2)*. He told the Colossians to *"put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (Col. 3:12)*. He told Titus to remind those under his leadership "to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men" (**Titus 3:1–2**).

## Meekness does not connote weakness.

The word was used in much extrabiblical literature to refer to the breaking of an animal.

# Meekness means power put under control.

A person without meekness is "like a city that is broken into and without walls" (Prov. 25:28).

***“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city”***  
**(Prov. 16:32).**

An unbroken colt is useless; medicine that is too strong will harm rather than cure; a wind out of control destroys. Emotion out of control also destroys, and has no place in God’s kingdom.

**Meekness uses its resources appropriately.**

**MEEKNESS IS THE OPPOSITE  
OF VIOLENCE AND VENGEANCE.**

The meek person, for example, accepts joyfully the seizing of his property, knowing that he has infinitely better and more permanent possessions awaiting him in heaven (**Heb. 10:34**).

**THE MEEK PERSON HAS DIED TO SELF, AND HE THEREFORE DOES NOT WORRY ABOUT INJURY TO HIMSELF, OR ABOUT LOSS, INSULT, OR ABUSE.**

The meek person does not defend himself, first of all because that is His Lord’s command and example, and second because he knows that he does not deserve defending. Being poor in spirit and having mourned over his great sinfulness, the **gentle** person stands humbly before God, knowing he has nothing to commend himself.

**Meekness is not cowardice or emotional flabbiness.**

## MEEKNESS IS NOT LACK OF CONVICTION NOR MERE HUMAN NICENESS.

But...

its courage, its strength, its conviction, and its pleasantness come from God, not from self.

The spirit of meekness is the spirit of Christ, who defended the glory of His Father, but gave Himself in sacrifice for others. Leaving an example for us to follow, He “committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously” (1 Pet. 2:21–23).

Though He was sinless, and therefore never deserved criticism or abuse, Jesus did not resist slander or repay injustice or threaten His tormentors. The only human being who did no wrong, the One who always had a perfect defense, never defended Himself.

WHEN HIS FATHER’S HOUSE WAS  
PROFANED BY MONEYCHANGERS AND  
SACRIFICE SELLERS, “HE MADE A  
SCOURGE OF CORDS, AND DROVE THEM  
ALL OUT OF THE TEMPLE, WITH THE SHEEP  
AND THE OXEN; AND HE Poured OUT THE  
COINS OF THE MONEYCHANGERS, AND  
OVERTURNED THEIR TABLES” (JOHN  
2:14–15). JESUS SCATHINGLY AND  
REPEATEDLY DENOUNCED THE  
HYPOCRITICAL AND WICKED RELIGIOUS  
LEADERS; HE TWICE CLEANSED THE  
TEMPLE BY FORCE; AND HE FEARLESSLY  
UTTERED DIVINE JUDGMENT ON THOSE

## WHO FORSOOK AND CORRUPTED GOD'S WORD. BUT JESUS DID NOT ONCE RAISE A FINGER OR GIVE A SINGLE RETORT IN HIS OWN DEFENSE.

Though at any time He could have called legions of angels to His side (Matt. 26:53), He refused to use either natural or supernatural power for His own welfare. Meekness is not weakness, but meekness does not use its power for its own defense or selfish purposes.

## **MEEKNESS IS POWER COMPLETELY SURRENDERED TO GOD'S CONTROL.**

### THE MANIFESTATION OF MEEKNESS

The best way to describe meekness is to illustrate it, to see it in action.

**Scripture abounds with instructive accounts of meekness.**

After God had called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldeans to the Promised Land and had made the marvelous unconditional covenant with him, a dispute about grazing lands arose between the servants of Abraham and those of his nephew Lot. All the land of Canaan had been promised to Abraham. He was God's chosen man and the Father of God's chosen people. Lot, on the other hand, was essentially a hanger-on, an in-law who was largely dependent on Abraham for his welfare and safety. Besides that, Abraham was Lot's uncle and his elder. Yet Abraham willingly let Lot take whatever land he wanted, thus giving up his rights and prerogatives for the sake of his nephew, for the sake of harmony between their households, and for the sake of their testimony before "the Canaanite and the Perizzite [who] were dwelling then in the land" (Gen. 13:5-9). Those things were much more important to Abraham than standing up for his own rights. He had both the

right and the power to do as he pleased in the matter, but **in meekness he gladly waived his rights and laid aside his power.**

Joseph was abused by his jealous brothers and eventually sold into slavery. When, by God's gracious plan, he came to be second only to Pharaoh in Egypt, he was in a position to take severe vengeance on his brothers. When they came to Egypt asking for grain for their starving families, Joseph could easily have refused and, in fact, could have put his brothers into more severe slavery than that into which they had sold him. Yet he had only forgiveness and love for them. When he finally revealed to them who he was, "he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard of it" (Gen. 45:2). Then he said to them, "Do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.... Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God" (vv. 5, 8). Later he told them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? And as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive" **(50:19–20). In meekness Joseph understood that it was God's place to judge and his to forgive and help.**

Moses killed an Egyptian who was beating some Hebrew slaves; faced up to Pharaoh to demand the release of his people; and was so angry at the orgy that Aaron and the people were having around the golden calf that he smashed the first set of tablets of the Ten Commandments. Yet he was called "very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3). **Moses vented his anger against those who harmed and enslaved his people and who rebelled against God, but he did not vent his anger against those who abused him or demand personal rights and privileges.**

When God called him to lead Israel out of Egypt, Moses felt completely inadequate, and pleaded, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" (Ex. 3:11). After God explained His plan for Moses to confront Pharaoh, Moses again pleaded, "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since Thou hast spoken to Thy servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue" (4:10). Moses would defend God before anyone, but he did not defend himself before God.

David was chosen by God and anointed by Samuel to replace Saul as Israel's king. But when, in the cave of Engedi, he had the opportunity to take Saul's life, as Saul often had tried to take

his, David refused to do so. He had such great respect for the king's office, despite that particular king's wickedness and abuse of him, that "David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's robe. So he said to his men, 'Far be it from me because of the Lord that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, since he is the Lord's anointed' " (1 Sam. 24:5–6).

Many years later, after David's rebellious son Absalom had routed his father from Jerusalem, a member of Saul's family named Shimei cursed David and threw stones at him. When one of David's soldiers wanted to cut off Shimei's head, David prevented him, saying, "Behold, my son who came out from me seeks my life; how much more now this Benjamite? Let him alone and let him curse, for the Lord has told him. Perhaps the Lord will look on my affliction and return good to me instead of his cursing this day" (2 Sam. 16:5–12).

By contrast, King Uzziah, who began to reign at the age of sixteen and who "did right in the sight of the Lord," and "continued to seek God" (2 Chron. 26:4–5), became self-confident after the Lord gave him great victories over the Philistines, Ammonites, and other enemies. "When he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the Lord his God, for he entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense" (v. 16). Uzziah thought he could do no wrong, and arrogantly performed a rite that he knew was restricted to the priests. He was so concerned with exalting himself and glorying in his greatness, that he disobeyed the God who had made him great and even profaned His Temple. As a consequence, "King Uzziah was a leper to the day of his death; and he lived in a separate house, being a leper, for he was cut off from the house of the Lord" (v. 21).

Of the many examples of meekness in the New Testament, the greatest other than Jesus Himself was Paul. He was by far the most educated of the apostles and the one, as far as we can tell, that God used most widely and effectively. Yet he refused to put any confidence in himself, "in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3). He knew that he could do all things, but only "through Him who strengthens me" (4:13).

## THE RESULT OF MEEKNESS

As with the other beatitudes, the general result of meekness is being **blessed**, being made divinely happy. God gives the meek His own joy and gladness.

More specifically, however, the **gentle ... shall inherit the earth**. After creating man in His own image, God gave man dominion over the whole earth (Gen. 1:28). The subjects of His kingdom are going to come someday into that promised inheritance, largely lost and perverted after the Fall. Theirs will be paradise regained.

One day God will completely reclaim His earthly domain, and those who have become His children through faith in His Son will rule that domain with Him. And the only ones who become His children and the subjects of His divine kingdom are those who are **gentle**, those who are meek, because they understand their unworthiness and sinfulness and cast themselves on the mercy of God.

The emphatic pronoun *autos* (**they**) is again used (see vv. 3, 4), indicating that **only those** who are meek **shall inherit the earth**.

Most Jews thought that the coming great kingdom of the Messiah would belong to the strong, of whom the Jews would be the strongest. But the Messiah Himself said that it would belong to the meek, and to Jew and Gentile alike.

*Klēronomeō* (to **inherit**) refers to the receiving of one's allotted portion, one's rightful inheritance.

**This beatitude is almost a direct quotation of Psalm 37:11**  
**"But the humble will inherit the (promised) land."**

For many generations faithful Jews had wondered, as God's people today sometimes wonder, why the wicked and godless seem to prosper and the righteous and godly seem to suffer. Through

David, God assured His people, *“Yet a little while and the wicked man will be no more; and you will look carefully for his place, and he will not be there”* (v. 10).

## THE WICKED PERSON’S TIME OF JUDGMENT WAS COMING, AS WAS THE RIGHTEOUS PERSON’S TIME OF BLESSING.

Our responsibility is to trust the Lord and obey His will.

The settling of accounts, whether in judgment or blessing, is in His hands and will be accomplished exactly in the right time and in the right way. In the meanwhile, God’s children live in faith and hope based on the certain promise, the divine pronouncement, that **they shall inherit the earth.**

Paul both warns and assures the Corinthians, saying, *“So then let no one boast in men. 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 Cor. 3:21–23).

**Because we belong to Christ, our place in the kingdom is as secure as His.**

It is also certain *“that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God”* (1 Cor. 6:9).

One day the Lord will take the earth from the hands of the wicked and give it to His righteous people, whom He will use “to execute vengeance on the nations, and punishment on the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute on them the judgment written” (Ps. 149:7–9).

Our inheritance of the earth is not entirely future, however. The promise of the future inheritance itself gives us hope and happiness now. And we are able to appreciate many things, even earthly things, in ways that only those who know and love the Creator can experience”.

In the beautiful words of Wade Robinson,

Heav'n above is softer blue,  
Earth around is sweeter green;  
Something lives in ev'ry hue  
Christless eyes have never seen!  
Birds with gladder songs o'erflow,  
Flow'rs with deeper beauties shine,  
Since I know, as now I know,  
I am His and He is mine.

Nearly a century ago George MacDonald wrote, “We cannot see the world as God means it in the future, save as our souls are characterized by meekness. In meekness we are its only inheritors. Meekness alone makes the spiritual retina pure to receive God’s things as they are, mingling with them neither imperfection nor impurity.”

## THE NECESSITY FOR MEEKNESS

Meekness is necessary first of all because it is required for salvation.

**Only the meek will inherit the earth, because only the meek belong to the King who will rule the future kingdom of the earth. “For the Lord takes delight in His people,” says the psalmist; “he crowns the humble with salvation” (Ps. 149:4).**

When the disciples asked Jesus who was the greatest in the kingdom, **“He called a child to Himself and set him before them,**

*and said, 'Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven' "* ([Matt. 18:2–4](#)).

**Meekness is also necessary because it is commanded.**

*"Seek the Lord, all you humble of the earth who have carried out His ordinances; seek righteousness, seek humility"* ([Zeph. 2:3](#)).

James commands believers, *"Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls"* ([James 1:21](#)).

Those who do not have a humble spirit are not able even to listen rightly to God's Word, much less understand and receive it.

Meekness is necessary because we cannot witness effectively without it. Peter says, "Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence" ([1 Pet. 3:15](#)). Pride will always stand between our testimony and those to whom we testify. They will see us instead of the Lord, no matter how orthodox our theology or how refined our technique.

Meekness is necessary because only **meekness gives glory to God.**

**Pride seeks its own glory, but meekness seeks God's.**

**Meekness is reflected in our attitude toward other children of God.**

**Humility in relation to fellow Christians gives God glory.** "Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus; that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God" ([Rom. 15:5–7](#)).

**Inheritance** [\[N\]](#) [\[S\]](#)

Legal inheritance refers to actual property or goods received after a family member's death. **While Jewish inheritance customs were linked to family blood lines, Greek and Roman laws also provided for the disposition of family possessions through the adoption of an heir. The Scriptures transform the concept of inheritance to include the acquisition of spiritual blessings and promises from God.**

**The Old Testament.** The Old Testament is rich in its usage of the inheritance metaphor. **The terms for inheritance occur over two hundred times**, most frequently in Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Psalms. While Jewish inheritance laws were specific and complete ( [Num27:8-11](#) ), **almost all references to inheritance in the Old Testament are theological, not legal.**

**In the theological sense, to inherit means to "receive an irrevocable gift" with an emphasis on the special relationship between the benefactor and the recipients.**

Unlike legal inheritance, the benefactor, God, does not die, yet he provides material and spiritual blessings for his people.

**The focus of the inheritance concept in the Old Testament is God's promise to Abraham. The land of Canaan was**

bequeathed to him and his descendants as an eternal possession ( [Gen 12:7](#) ). Each family in Israel was apportioned its own inheritance as an inalienable possession (Josh13-31) and given the task to occupy the land ( [Judges 1:3](#) ).

As the biblical history of Israel unfolds, the promised inheritance specifies a righteous remnant who will inherit the world as an everlasting possession ( [Psalm 2:8](#) ; [Isa 54:3](#) ; [Dan 7:14](#) ).

From the promise of Canaan as Israel's inheritance came other aspects of the concept. **THE NATION IS DESCRIBED AS GOD'S INHERITANCE** ( [1 Kings 8:51](#) [1 Kings 8:53](#) ; [Psalm 78:71](#) ; [Isa 19:25](#) ; [Zech 2:12](#) ) whom the Lord will never forsake ( [Psalm 94:14](#) ). **THE LORD IS CONVERSELY DESCRIBED AS THE INHERITANCE OF THE NATION** ( [Psalm 16:5](#) ). The privileged position of Israel as God's chosen people placed them at the center of God's plans for blessing.

*Between the Testaments.* In the intertestamental period the actual appropriation of this promise seemed remote due to the domination of Persian, Greek, and Roman powers. The reality of the inheritance of the land was deferred to the future and intertestamental literature emphasized the inheritance of eternal life and the world to come. The focus of the promised inheritance was less on national prominence in the present and more on personal participation in the future life with God.

This idea was broadened in the rabbinic literature where having an inheritance or share in the world to come was a primary aspiration of the Jews. A notable dichotomy existed between those who would inherit the future world (the redeemed) and those who would not (the condemned). By the time of the New Testament, it was common

for a person to ask a rabbi, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" ( [Matt 19:16](#) ).

*The New Testament.* **THE LEGAL-HISTORICAL MILIEU OF THE FIRST CENTURY PROVIDED AN ARRAY OF INHERITANCE TRADITIONS. JEWISH, GRECO-HELLENISTIC, AND ROMAN INHERITANCE LAWS DIFFERED GREATLY IN THE MEANING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR TRADITIONS.**

However, as in the Old Testament, almost all occurrences of the terms for inheritance in the New Testament are theological ( [Luke 12:13](#) ; is the lone exception ).

## **Who Are the Heirs?**

**3 major characters dominate the inheritance usage in the New Testament:**

- 1. Abraham**
- 2. Christ**
- 3. The believer.**

The New Testament continues the focus on Abraham as a central figure of the inheritance metaphor. The initial promise to Abraham of the land of Canaan ( [Heb 11:8](#) ) is broadened to include "the world" ( [Rom 4:13](#) ). While the fact of Abraham's inheritance is significant, the New Testament concentrates on the means by which he received the inheritance: God's promise and Abraham's faith, not by works of the law ( [Rom 4:14](#) ; [Gal 3:18](#) ).

**The second major character is Jesus Christ. His prominent position as the Son of God uniquely qualifies him as God's heir.**

**He is presented as the heir of all things** ( [Hebrews 1:2](#) [Hebrews 1:4](#) ) **and the promises of God's kingdom are focused in him** ( [Matt 21:38](#) ).

Finally,

for the believer in Christ, heirship is a natural result of justification:

"He saved us, ... so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life" ( [Titus 3:5-7](#) ).

Since all believers are children of God they are necessarily heirs of God ( [Rom 8:17](#) ; [Gal 4:7](#) ). It follows naturally that Christians are also heirs along with Abraham and Christ ( [Gal 3:29](#) ). They receive their inheritance by faith as did Abraham ( [Rom 4:13-14](#) ) and share in the inheritance with Christ as sons ( [Rom 8:17](#) ).

## *What Is the Inheritance?*

Throughout the New Testament, a striking promise for believers is simply "the inheritance" ( [Acts 20:32](#) ; [26:18](#) ; [Ephesians 1:14](#) [Ephesians 1:18](#) ; [Col 3:24](#) ). Generally, the promise refers to the possession of

salvation ( [Heb 1:14](#) ). The believer's inheritance is described more specifically as eternal and joyful existence with God. Believers are promised "an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you" ( [1 Peter 1:4](#) ). Inheriting the "world to come" is a guarantee for all those who belong to God's family.

*The apostle Paul employs the inheritance metaphor more than any other New Testament writer. For him, the object of the inheritance is the kingdom of God. He never states exactly what constitutes the believer's inheritance of the kingdom, but asserts emphatically that unbelievers will not inherit the kingdom* ( [1 Cor 6:9-10](#) ; [Gal 5:21](#) ; [Eph 5:5](#) ).

*The Bible is clear that inheriting eternal life is synonymous with entering the kingdom. At the judgment, the righteous will inherit the kingdom ( [Matt 25:34](#) ) but the wicked will be eternally tormented ( [Matt 25:46](#) ). The finality of the separation of those outside of the family of God is clearly seen in their lack of a share in God's inheritance.*

*The concept of the believer's inheritance highlights the dignity of the family relationship of the believer in Christ. No higher position or greater wealth can an*

*individual acquire than to become an heir of God through faith in Christ.*

[William E. Brown](#)

[GotQuestions.org](#)

## What is our inheritance in Christ?

The Bible is full of references to the inheritance believers have in Christ. [Ephesians 1:11](#) says, *"In [Christ] we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will"* (ESV).

Other passages that mention a believer's inheritance include [Colossians 3:24](#) and [Hebrews 9:15](#).

**OUR INHERITANCE IS, IN A WORD,**

# HEAVEN.

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IT IS THE SUM TOTAL OF ALL GOD HAS PROMISED US IN SALVATION.

Words related to *inheritance* in Scripture are *portion* and *heritage*.

**First Peter 1:4** describes this inheritance further, saying that ***we have been born again "into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you."***

According to the apostle Peter, our inheritance is distinguished by four important qualities:

## **Our inheritance in Christ is imperishable.**

What we have in Christ is not subject to corruption or decay. In contrast, everything on earth is in the process of decaying, rusting, or falling apart. The law of entropy affects our houses, our cars, and even our own bodies. Our treasure in heaven, though, is unaffected by entropy ([Matthew 6:19-20](#)). ***Those who have been born again are born "not of perishable seed, but of imperishable,***

*through the living and enduring word of God" ([1 Pt. 1:23](#)).*

## **Our inheritance in Christ is unspoiled.**

What we have in Christ is free from anything that would deform, debase, or degrade. Nothing on earth is perfect. Even the most beautiful things of this world are flawed; if we look closely enough, we can always find an imperfection. But Christ is truly perfect. He is "holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens" ([Hebrews 7:26](#)), and our inheritance in Him is also holy, blameless, exalted, and pure. No earthly corruption or weakness can touch what God has bestowed. [Revelation 21:27](#) says that

*"nothing impure will ever enter [the New Jerusalem], nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful."*

## **Our inheritance in Christ is unfading.**

What we have in Christ is an enduring possession. As creatures of this world, it is hard for us to imagine colors that never fade, excitement that never flags, or value that never depreciates; but our inheritance is not of this world. Its glorious intensity will never diminish. God says, "I am making everything new!" ([Revelation 21:5](#)).

## **Our inheritance in Christ is reserved.**

What we have in Christ is being "kept" in heaven for us. Your crown of glory has your name on it. **Although we enjoy many blessings as children of God here on earth, our true inheritance—our true home—is reserved for us in heaven.**

Like Abraham, we are "looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God" ([Hebrews 11:10](#)). **THE HOLY SPIRIT GUARANTEES THAT WE WILL RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE IN THE WORLD TO COME ([2 Corinthians 1:22](#)).**

In fact, *"when you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who*

***is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance"***  
**(Ephesians 1:13-14)**.

Jesus prayed for His followers, "Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name" ([John 17:11](#)). We are secure, being guarded by the Almighty Himself, and surely our inheritance is equally secure. No one can steal it from us. **John 10:28-29**: ***"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand."*** See also [Matthew 6:20](#).

As God's children, "adopted" into His family, we have been assured an inheritance from our Heavenly Father. ***"Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory"*** (**Romans 8:17**).

This heavenly heritage is God's purpose and will for us ([Ephesians 1:11](#)). We receive the promise of our inheritance by hearing the word of truth and believing in Christ ([Ephesians 1:13](#)).

One day, we will take possession of our portion, our heritage, our full inheritance.

**John Calvin writes** of our inheritance, "We do not have the full enjoyment of it at present. . . . We walk . . . in hope, and we do not see the thing as if it were present, but we see it by faith. . . . Although, then, the world gives itself liberty to trample us under foot, as they say; although our Lord keeps us tried with many temptations; **although he humbles us in such a way that it may seem**

we are as sheep appointed to the slaughter, so that we are continually at death's door, yet we are not destitute of a good remedy. And why

Seeing that the Holy Spirit reigns in our hearts, we have something for which to give praise even in the midst of all our temptations. . . . [Therefore,] we should rejoice, mourn, grieve, give thanks, be content, wait" (from Calvin's Ephesian sermons, delivered in Geneva, 1558—59).

**WHEN WE UNDERSTAND AND VALUE THE GLORY THAT AWAITS US, WE ARE BETTER ABLE TO ENDURE WHATEVER COMES OUR WAY IN THIS LIFE.**

We can give God praise even during trials because we have His guarantee that we will receive all He has promised: ***"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all" (2 Corinthians 4:17).***

**Revelation 21:4** gives us a brief but beautiful description of ***our inheritance: "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." God and man will dwell together.***

Everything will be made new. The bejeweled city, [New Jerusalem](#), will be our residence. The [river of life](#) will issue from God's throne. The healing tree of life with twelve kinds of fruit will grow there, too. There will be no night there, because the eternal light of the Lamb will fill the [new heaven and new earth](#) and shine upon all the heirs of God.

**David writes,**

"Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup; / you make my lot secure. / The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; / surely I have a delightful inheritance" ([Psalm 16:5-6](#)).

And that is why "we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" ([2 Corinthians 4:18](#)).

## [International Standard Bible Encyclopedia - Inheritance](#)

### INHERITANCE

in-her'-i-tans (nahalah, **"something inherited," "occupancy," "heirloom," "estate," "portion"**):

The word is used in its widest application in the Old Testament Scriptures, referring not only to an estate received by a child from its parents, but also to the land received by the children of Israel as a gift from Yahweh. And in the figurative and poetical sense, the expression is applied to the kingdom of God as represented in the consecrated lives of His followers.

In a similar sense, **the Psalmist is represented as speaking of the Lord as the portion of his inheritance.**

In addition to the above word, the King James Version translations as inheritance, morashah, "a possession," "heritage" ([Deuteronomy 33:4](#); [Ezekiel 33:24](#)); yerushshah, "something occupied," "a patrimony," "possession" ([Judges 21:17](#)); cheleq, "smoothness," "allotment" ([Psalms 16:5](#)); kleronomeo, "to inherit" ([Matthew 5:5](#), etc.); kleronomos, "heir" ([Matthew 21:38](#), etc.); kleronomia, "heirship," "patrimony," "possession"; or kleros, "an acquisition" "portion," "heritage," from kleroo, "to assign," "to allot," "to obtain an inheritance" ([Matthew 21:38](#); [Luke 12:13](#); [Acts 7:5](#); [20:32](#); [26:18](#); [Galatians 3:18](#); [Ephesians 1:11,14,18](#); [5:5](#); [Colossians 1:12](#); [3:24](#); [Hebrews 1:4](#); [9:15](#); [11:8](#); [1 Peter 1:4](#)).

The Pentateuch distinguishes clearly between real and personal property, the fundamental idea regarding the former being the thought that the land is God's, given by Him to His children, the people of Israel, and hence, cannot be alienated ([Leviticus 25:23,28](#)).

In order that there might not be any respecter of persons in the division, the lot was to determine the specific piece to be owned by each family head ([Numbers 26:52-56](#); [33:54](#)). In case, through necessity of circumstances, a homestead was sold, the title could pass only temporarily; for in the year of Jubilee every homestead must again return to the original owner or heir ([Leviticus 25:25-34](#)).

Real estate given to the priesthood must be appraised, and could be redeemed by the payment of the appraised valuation, thus preventing the transfer of real property even in this case ([Leviticus 27:14-25](#)).

#### **INHERITANCE WAS CONTROLLED BY THE FOLLOWING REGULATIONS:**

**(1) The firstborn son inherited a double portion** of all the father's possession ([Deuteronomy 21:15-17](#));

**(2) the daughters were entitled to an inheritance, provided there were no sons** in the family ([Numbers 27:8](#));

**(3) in case there were no direct heirs, the brothers or more distant kinsmen were recognized (27:9-11); in no case should an estate pass from one tribe to another.**

The above points were made the subject of statutory law at the instance of the daughters of Zelophehad, the entire case being clearly set forth in [Numbers 27; 36](#).

Frank E. Hirsch

## **The Third Beatitude** Scripture: [Matthew 5:5](#)

No. 3065

A Sermon Published on Thursday, November 7, 1907,

Delivered by C.H. Spurgeon,

At The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, Newington,

On Thursday Evening, December 11, 1873.

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” — Matthew 5:5

I HAVE often reminded you. that the beatitudes in this chapter rise one above the other, and spring out, of one another, and that those which come before are always necessary to those that follow after. This third beatitude, “Blessed are the meek,” could not have stood first., — it would have been quite out, of place there. When a man is converted, the first operation of the grace of God within his soul is to give him true poverty of spirit, so the first beatitude is, “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” The Lord first makes us know our emptiness, and so humbles us; and then, next, he makes us mourn over the deficiencies

that are so manifest in us. Then comes the second beatitude: “Blessed are they that mourn.” First there is a true knowledge of ourselves; and then a sacred grief arising out of that knowledge. Now, no man ever becomes truly meek, in the Christian sense of that word, until he first knows himself, and then begins to mourn and lament that he is so far short of what he ought to be. Self-righteousness is never meek; the man who is proud of himself will be quite sure to be hard-hearted in his dealings with others. To reach this rung of the ladder of light, he must first set his feet upon the other two. There must be poverty of spirit and mourning of heart before there will come that gracious meekness of which our text speaks.

Note too that this third beatitude is of a higher order than the other two. There is something positive in it, as to, virtue. The first two are rather expressive of deficiency, but here there is something supplied. A man is poor in spirit; that is, he feels that he lacks a thousand things that he ought to possess. The man mourns; that is, he laments over his state of spiritual poverty. But now there is something really given to him by the grace of God ; — not a negative quality, but a positive proof of the work of the Holy Spirit within his soul, so that he has become meek. The first two characters that receive a benediction appear to be wrapped up in themselves. The man is poor in spirit; that relates to himself. His mourning is his own personal mourning which ends when he is comforted; but the meekness has to do with other people. It is true that it has a relationship to ‘God, but a man’s meekness is specially towards his fellow-men. He is not simply meek within himself; his meekness is manifest in his dealings with others. You would not speak of a hermit, who nearer saw a fellow creature, as being meek; the only way in which you could prove whether he was meek would be to put him with those who would try his temper-. So that this meekness is a virtue, larger, more expansive, working in a wider sphere than the first, two characteristics which Christ has pronounced blessed. It is superior to the others, as it should be, since it grows out of them; yet, at the same time, as there is, through the whole of the beatitudes, a fall parallel with the rise:, so is it here. In the first case, the man was poor, that was low; in the second case, the man was mourning, that also was low; but if he kept his mourning to himself, he might still seem great among his fellow-men. But, now he has come to be meek among them , — lowly and humble in the midst of society, so that he is going lower and lower; yet he is rising with spiritual exaltation, although he is sinking as to Personal humiliation, and so has become more truly gracious.

Now, having spoken of the connection of this beatitude, we will make two enquiries with the view of opening it up. They are these — -first, who are the meek? and, secondly, how and in what sense can they be said to inherit the earth ?

### I. First, then, WHO ARE THE MEEK?

I have already said that they are those who have been made poor in spirit by God, and who have been made to mourn before, God, and have been comforted; but, here, we learn that they are also meek, that, is, lowly and gentle in mind before' God and before men.

They are meek before God, and good old Watson divides that quality under two heads, namely, that they are, submissive to his will, and flexible to his Word. May these two very expressive qualities be found in each one of us!

So the truly meek are, first, of all, submissive to God's will Whatever God wills, they will. They are of the mind of that shepherd, on Salisbury Plain, of whom good Dr. Stenhouse enquired, "What kind of weather shall we, have to-morrow?" " Well," replied the shepherd, "we, shall have the sort of whether that pleases me." The doctor then asked, "What do you mean?" And the shepherd answered, "What, weather pleases God always pleases me." "Shepherd," said the doctor, "your lot seems somewhat hard." "Oh, no, sir!" he replied, "I don't think so; for it abounds with mercies." "But you have to work very hard, do you not? .... Yes," he answered, "there is a good deal of labor, but that is better than being lazy." "But you have to endure many hardships, do you not? .... Oh, yes, sir!" he said, "a great many; but. then I don't have so many temptations as those people have who live in the midst, of toms, and I have more time for meditating upon my God. So I am perfectly satisfied that where God has placed me is the best position I could be, in." With such a happy, contented spirit as that, those who are meek do not quarrel with God. They do not talk, as some foolish people do, of having been born under a wrong planet, and placed in circumstances unfavorable to their development.. And even when they axe smitten by God's rod, they do not rebel against him, and call him a hard Master; but they are either dumb with silence, and open not their mouth because God hath done it,, or if they do speak, it is to ask for grace, that the trim they are enduring may be sanctified to them, or they may even rise, so high in grace as to, glory in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon them. The proud-hearted

may, if they will, arraign their Maker, and the thing formed may say to him who formed it, "Why hast thou made me thus?" But these men of grace will not do so. It is enough for them if God wills anything; if he wills it, so los it be, — Solomon's throne or Job's dunghill; they desire to be equally happy wherever the Lord may place them, or however he may deal with them

They are also flexible to God's Word; if they are really meek, they are always willing to bend. They do not imagine what the truth ought to be, and then come to the Bible for texts to Prove what they think should be there; but they go to the inspired Book with a candid mind, and they Pray, with the psalmist, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." And when, in searching the Scriptures, they find deep mysteries which they cannot comprehend, they believe where they cannot understand; and where, sometimes, different parts of Scripture seem to conflict with one another, they leave the explanation to the great Interpreter who alone can make all plain. Wheel they meet with doctrines that are contrary to their own notions, and hard for flesh and blood to receive, their yield up themselves to the Divine Spirit, and pray, "What we know not, teach thou to us." When the meek in spirit find, in the Word of God, any precept, they seek to obey it at once. They do not cavil at it or ask if they can avoid it., or raise that oft-repeated question, "Is it essential to salvation?" They are not so selfish that they would do nothing except salvation depends upon it; they love their God so much that they desire to obey even the least command that he gives, simply out of love to him.. The meek in spirit, axe, like a photographer's sensitive plates, and as the Word of God passes before them, they desire to have its image imprinted upon their hearts. Their hearts axe the fleshy tablets on which the mind of God is recorded; God is the Writer, and they become living epistles, written, not with ink, but. with the finger of the living God. Thus are they meek towards God.

But meekness is a quality which also relates largely to men; and I think it mesa.ns, first, that the wan is humble. He bears himself, among his fellowmen, not as a Caesar who, as Shakespeare says, doth "bestride the narrow world like a Colossus," beneath whose huge legs ordinary men may walk, and peep about to find themselves dishonorable graves; but he, knows that he, is only a man, and that. the best, of men axe but mine at the best, and he does not even claim to be one of the best, of men.. He knows himself to be less than the least of all saints; and, in some respects, the very chief of sinners

Therefore he does not expect, to have the first place in the synagogue, nor the highest seat at the feast; but he is quite, satisfied if he may pass among his fellow-men as a notable instance of the power of God's grace, and may be known by them as one who is a great, debtor to the lovingkindness of the Lord. He does not seem himself up to be a very superior being. If he is of high birth, he does not boast of it; if he is of low birth, he does not try to put himself on a level with those who are in a higher rank of life,. He is not one who boasts of his wealth, or of his talents; he knows that a man is not judged by God by any of these things; and if tare Lord is pleased to give him, much grace, and to make him very useful in bas service, he only feels that he owes the more to his Master, and is the more responsible to him. So he lies the lower before God, and walks the more humbly among men'. The meek-spirited man is always of a humble, temper and carriage. He is the very opposite of the proud man who, you feel, must be a person of consequence, at any rate to himself; and to whom you know that you must give way, unless you would have an altercation with him,. He is a gentleman who expects always to have his top-gallants flying in all weathers, he must ever have his banner borne in front, of him, and everybody else must, pay respect to him. The great "I" stands conspicuous in him at all times. He lives in the first house in the street, in the best room, in the front parlour; and when he wakes in the, morning, he. shakes hands with himself, and congratulates himself upon being such a fine fellow as he is! That, is the very opposite of being meek; and, therefore, humility, although it is not all that there is in meekness, is one of the, chief characteristics of it.

Out of this grows gentleness of spirit. The man is gentle; he does not speak harshly; his tones are not imperious, his spirit is not, domineering. He will often give up what he thinks to be lawful, because he does not think it, is expedient for the good of others. He seeks to be a true brother among his brethren, thinks himself most, honored when he can be the doorkeeper of the house of the 'Lord, or perform any menial service for the household of faith. I know some professing Christians who axe very harsh and repellent. You would not think of going to tell them your troubles; you could not open your heart, to them,. They do not seem to be able to come down to your level. They axe up on a mountain, and they speak down' to you as a poor creature far below them. That is not, the true Christian spirit; that. is not, being meek. The Christian who is really supra for to others amongst, whom he moves is just the man who lowers himself to the level of the lowest, for the general

good of all. He imitates his Master, who, though he was equal with God, “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant.” And in consequence, he is loved and trusted as his Master was, and even little children come to him, and he does not repel them. He is gentle towards them, as a leering mother avoids all harshness in dealing with her children.

In addition to being humble and gentle, the meek are patient. They know “it must needs be that offenses come;” yet they are too meek either to give offense or to take offense. If others grieve them, they put up with it. They do not merely forgive seven times, but seventy times seven; in fact, they often do not feel as if anything had been done that needed any forgiveness, for they have not taken it as an affront they consider that a mistake was made, so they are not angry at it. He may be angry for a moment; he would not be a man if he were not. But there is such a thing as being angry, and yet not sinning; and the meek man turns his anger wholly upon the evil, and away from the person who did the wrong, and is as ready to do him a kindness as if he had never transgressed at all. If there should be anybody here who is of an angry spirit, kindly take home these remarks, and try to mend ‘that matter, for a Christian must get the better of an angry temper. Little pots soon boil over; and I have known some professing Christians, who are such, very little pots, that the smallest fire has made them boil over. When you never meant anything to hurt their feelings, they have been terribly hurt. The simplest remark has been taken as an insult, and a construction put upon things that never was intended, sad they make their brother offenders for a word, or for half a word, ay, and even for not saying a word. Sometimes, if a man does not see them in the street through being short-sighted, they are sure he, passed them on purpose, and would not speak to them because they are not so well off as he is. Whether a thing be done or not, it equally fails to please them. They are always on the alert for some cause of annoyance, and almost remind one of the Irishman at Donnybrook Fair, trailing his coat in the dirt, and asking for somebody to tread on it, that he may have the pleasure of knocking that somebody down. When I hear of anybody like that losing his temper, I always pray that he may not find it again, for such tempers are best lost. The meek-spirited man may be, naturally, very hot and fiery, but he has had grace given to him to keep his temper in subjection. He does not say, “That is my constitution, and I cannot help it,” as so many do. God will never excuse us because of our constitution; his grace is given to us to cure our evil constitutions, and to kill our corruptions. We are not, to spare

any Amalekites because they are called constitutional sins, but we are to bring them all out, — even Agog who goeth delicately, — and slay there before the Lord, who can make us more than conquerors over every sin, whether constitutional or otherwise;

But since this is a wicked world, and them are, some men who will persecute us, and others who will try to rob us of our right, and do us serious injury, the meek man goes beyond merely bearing what has to be borne, for he freely forgives the injury that is done to him. It is an ill sign when anyone refuses to forgive another.

I have heard of a father saying that his child should never darken his door again. Does that, father know that he can never miter heaven while he cherishes such a spirit as that? I have heard of one saying, “I will never forgive So-and-so.” Do, you know that God will never hear your prayer for forgiveness until you forgive others? That is the very condition which Christ taught his disciples to present: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive, our debtors.” If thou takest thy brother by the throat, because he oweth thee a hundred pence, canst, thou think that God will forgive thee the thousand talents which thou owest to him? So the meek-spirited man forgives those who, wrong him; he reckons that injuries are permitted to be done to him as trials of his grace, to see whether he can forgive them, and he does so, and does so right, heartily. It used to be said of Archbishop Cranmer, “Do my lord of Canterbury an ill turn, and he will be, a friend to you as long as you live,.” That was a noble spirit, to take the mail who had been his enemy, and to make him henceforth to be a friend. This is the way to imitate him who prayed for his murderers, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do;” and this is the very opposite of a revengeful spirit. There are, some who say that they have been wronged, and they will retaliate; but “retaliation” is not a, Christian word. “Revenge” is not a word that ought to be found in a Christian’s dictionary; he reckons it to be of the Babylonian dialect, and of the language of Satan. His only revenge is to heap coals of fire upon his adversary’s head by doing him all the good he can in return for the evil that, he has done.

I think that meekness also involves contentment. The meek-spirited man is not ambitious; he is satisfied with what God provides for him. He does not say that his soul loathes the daily manna, and the water from the rock never

loses its sweetness to his taste. His motto, is, "God's providence is my inheritance." He has his ups and his downs, but he blesses the Lord that his God is a God of the hills, and also of theirs, lies; and if he can have God's face shining upon him, he cares little whether it be, hills or valleys upon which he walks. He is content with what he has, and he says, "Enough, is as good as a, feast." Whatever happens to him, seeing that his times are in, God's hand, it is with him well, in the best and most emphatic sense. The meek man is no Napoleon who will wade through human blood to reach a throne, and shut the gates of mercy on mankind. To meek man is no miser, hoarding up, with an all-devouring greed, everything that comes to his hand, and adding house to hour, and field to field, so long as he lives. The meek man has a laudable desire to make use of his God-given talents, and to find for himself a position in, which he. may do more good to his fellow-men; but he is not unrestful, anxious, fretful, grieving, grasping; he is contented and thankful.

Put those five qualities together, and you have the, truly meek man, — humble, gentle, patient, forgiving, and contented; the very opposite of the man who is proud, harsh, angry, revengeful, and ambitious. It, is only the grace of God, as it, works in us by the Holy Spirit,, that. can make, us thus meek. There: have; been some who have thought themselves meek when they were, not,. The Fifth Monarchy men, in Cromwell's day, said that they were meek, and that they were, therefore, to inherit, the earth; so they wanted to turn other men out. of their estates and houses so that they might have them, and thereby they proved that they were not meek; for if they had been, they would have been content with what they had, and let other people enjoy wheat belonged to them. There are some people who are very gentle and meek so. long as nobody tries them. We are all of us remarkably good-tempered while, we, have our own way; but the true meekness, which is a work of grace, will stored the fire of persecution, and will endure the test of enmity, cruelty, and wrong, even as the meekness of Christ, did upon the cross of Calvary.

II. Now, in the second place,, let us think of How THE MEEK INHERIT THE EARTH.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit, the earth." This promise is similar to the inspired declaration of Paul, "Godliness is profitable,

unto all things, having promise, of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." So, first, it is the meek man, who inherits the earth, for he is the earth's conqueror. He is the conqueror of the world whenever he goes. William the Conqueror came to, England with sword and fire, but the Christian conqueror wins his victories in a superior manner by the weapons of kindness and meekness. In the Puritan times, there was an eminent and godly minister, named Mr. Deering, who has left some writings that are still valuable. While sitting at table, one day, a graceless fellow insulted him by throwing a glass of beer in his face. The good man simply took his handkerchief, wiped his face, and went on eating his dinner. The man provoked him a second time by doing the same thing, and he even did it a third time with many oaths and blasphemy. Mr. Deering made no reply, but simply wiped his face; and, on the third occasion, the man came, and fell at his feet, and said that the spectacle of his Christian meekness, and the look of tender, pitying love that Mr. Deering had cast upon him, had quite subdued him. So the good man was the conqueror of the bad one. No Alexander was ever greater than the man who could bear such insults like that. And holy Mr. Dodd, when he spoke to, a man who was swearing in the street, received a blow in the mouth that knocked out two of his teeth. The holy man wiped the blood from his face, and said to his assailant, "You may knock out all my teeth if you will permit me, just to speak to you so that; your soul may be saved;" and the man was won by this Christian forbearance. It is, wonderful what rough natures, will yield before gentle natures. After all, it is not the strong who, conquer, but the weak. There, has been a long enmity, as you know, between the wolves and the sheep; and the sheep have never taken to fighting, yet they have won the victory, and there are more sheep than wolves in the world to-day. In our own country, the wolves are all dead. but the sheep have multiplied by tens of thousands. The, anvil stands still while, the hammer beats upon it., but one anvil wears out many hammers.

And gentleness and patience will ultimately win the day. At this present moment, who is the mightier? Caesar with his legions or Christ with his cross? We know who will be the victor before long, — Mahomet with his sharp scimitar or Christ with his doctrine of love. When all earthly forces are overthrown, Christ's kingdom will still stand. Nothing is mightier than meekness, and it is the meek who inherit the earth in that sense.

Theft inherit the earth in another sense, namely, that they enjoy what they have. If you find me a man who. thoroughly enjoys life, I will tell you at once that he is a meek, quiet-spirited man. Enjoyment of life does not consist in the possession of riches. There are many sick men who are, utterly miserable, and there are many poor men who are equally miserable. You may trove misery, or you may have happiness, according to your state of heart in any condition, of life. The meek man is thankful, happy, and contented, and it is contentment that makes life enjoyable. It is so at mar common meals. Here comes a man home to his dinner; he bows his head, and says, “For what we are about to receive, the Lord make us truly thankful;” and then opens his eyes, and grumbles, ‘: Wirer! cold mutton again?” His spirit is very different from that of the good old Christian who, whoa he reached home, found two herrings and two or three parables on the table, and he pronounced over them this blessing, “Heavenly Father, we thank thee that thou hast, ransacked both earth and sea to find us this entertainment.” His dinner was not so good as the other man’s, but he was content with it, and that made it bee:tin’. Oh, the grumbings that some have, when rolling in wealth, and the enjoyment that others have, where they have but little, for the dinner of herbs is sweeter than the stalled ox if contentment be but there. “A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth,” but in the meek and quiet spirit which thanks God for whatever he pleases to. give.

“Oh!” says someone, “but that is not inheriting the earth; it is only inheriting a part of it.” Well, it is inheriting as much of it as we need, and there is a sense in which the meek do. really inherit the whole earth. I have often felt, when I have been in a meek and quiet spirit,, as if everything around belonged to me. I have walked through a gentleman’s park, and I have been very much obliged to him :for keeping it in such order on purpose for me to walk through it.. I have gone inside his house, and seen his picture gallery, and I have been very grateful to him for buying such grand pictures, and I have hoped that he, would buy a few more so that I might see, them when I came next time. I was very glad that I had not to buy them, and to pay the, servants to watch over them,, and that everything was done foe: me,. And I have sometimes looked, from a hill, upon some fax-reaching plain, or some quiet village, or some manufacturing town, crowded with houses and shops, and ][have felt that they were all mine, although I had not the trouble of collecting the rents which people perhaps might not like to pay. I had only to look upon it, all as the sun shone upon it, and then to look up to heaven, and

say, "My Father, this is all thine; and, therefore, it is all mine; for I am an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ." So, in this sense, the meek spirited man inherits the whole each.

He also inherits it in another sense, — that is to say, whatever other men have, he is glad to think that they have it. Perhaps he is walking, and gets weary; someone comes riding by, and he says to himself, "Thank God that man does not need to walk, and get tired, as I do. I am glad there is somebody who is free from that trial." He works very hard, and perhaps earns very little; but he lives next door to a working-man who has twice his wages, and he says, "Thank God that my neighbor does not have such a pinch as I have; I should not like to see him in such a plight as I am in." Sometimes, when I am ill, someone comes in., and says, "I have been to see somebody who is worse than you are;" but I never get any comfort out of such, a remark as that, and my usual answer is, "You have made me feel worse than I was before by telling me that there is somebody worse even than I am." The greater comfort for a meek man is this, "Though I am ill, there are plenty of people who are well;" or this, "Though. I am blind, I bless God that my dear brethren can see the flowers and the sun;" or this, "Though I am lame, I am thankful that others can run ;" or this, "Though I am depressed in spirit, I am, glad that there are sweet-voiced singers;" or this, "Though I am an owl, I rejoice that there are larks to soar and sing, and eagles to mount towards the sun." The meek-spirited man is glad to know that other people are happy, and their happiness is his happiness; he will have a great umber of heavens, for everybody else's heaven will be a heaven to him. It will be a heaven to him to know that so many other people are in heaven, and for each one whom he sees there he will praise the Lord. Meekness gives us the enjoyment of what is other people's, yet they have none the less because of our enjoyment of it.

Again, the meek-spirited man inherits the earth in this sense,-if there is anybody who is good anywhere near him, he is sure to see him. I have known persons join the church, and after they have been a little while in it, they have said, "There is no love there." Now, when a brother says, "There is no love there," I know that he has been looking in the glass, and that his own reflection has suggested his remark. Such. persons cry out about the deceptions and hypocrisies in, the professing church, and they have some cause for doing so; only it is a pity that they cannot also see the good people, the true saints, who are there. The Lord still has a people who love and fear

him, a people who will be his in the dry when he makes up his jewels; and it is a pity if we are not, able to see what God so much admires. If we are meek, we shall the more readily see the excellences of other people. That is a very beautiful passage, in the second part of "The Pilgrim's Progress," which tells that, when Christians and Mercy had both been bathed in the bath, and clothed in the fine linen, white and doan, "they began to esteem each other better than themselves." If we also do this, we shall not think so 'badly as some of us now do of this poor present life, but shall go through it thanking God, and praising his name, and so inheriting the earth.

With a gentle temper, and a quiet spirit, and grace, to keep you so, you will be inheriting the earth under any circumstances. If trouble should come, you will bow to it, as the willow bows to the wind, and so escapes the injury that falls upon sturdier trees. If there should come little vexations, you will not allow yourself to be vexed by them; but will say, "With a little patience, they will all pass away." I think I never admired Archbishop Leighton more than when I read a certain incident, that is recorded in his life. He lived in a small house in Scotland, and had only a manservant beside himself in the house. John, the manservant, was very forgetful; and, one morning, when he got up before his master, he thought he, would like to have a day's fishing, so he went off, and locked his master in. He, fished until late in the evening, forgot all about his master, and when he came back, what, do you think the bishop said to him. He simply said, "John, if you go out for a day's fishing another time, kindly leave me the key." He, had had a happy day of prayer and study all by himself. If it had been some of us, we should have been fuming, and fretting, and getting up a nice lecture for John when he, came, back; and he richly deserved it; but I do not suppose it, was worth while for the good man to put himself out about, him. The incident is, I think, a good illustration of our text.

But the text means more than I have yet. said, for the promise, "They shall inherit the earth," may be read, "the..- shall inherit, the land," that is, the promised land, the heavenly Canaan. These are the men who shall inherit heaven, for up there they are all mean-spirited. Thence are no contentions there; pride cannot enter there. Anger, wrath, and malice never pollute the atmosphere, of the celestial city. There, all bow before the King of kings, and all rejoice in communion with him and with one another. Ah, beloved, if we are ever to enter heaven, we must fling away ambition, and discontent, and

wrath, and self-seeking, and selfishness. May God's grace purge, us of all these; for, as long as any of that evil leaven is in our soul, where God is we cannot go.

And than, dear friends, the text means yet more than that, — -are shall inherit this earth by-and by David wrote, "The meek shall inherit the earth.; and shall delight, themselves in, the abundance of peace." After this earth has been purified by fire., after God shall have burned the works of men to ashes, and every trace of corrupt; humanity shall have been destroyed by the fervent heat, then shall flits earth be fitted up again, and angels shall descend with new songs to sing, and the New Jerusalem shall come down out of heaven from God in all her glory. And then upon this earth, where once was war, the clarion shall ring no more; there shall be neither swords nor spears, and men shall learn the arts of war no more. The meek shall then possess, the land, and every hill and valley shall be glad, and every fruitful plain shall ring with shoutings of joy, and peace, and gladness, throughout the long millennial day. The Lord send it., and may we all be among the meek who shall possess the new Eden, whose flowers shall never wither, and whore: no serpent's trail shall eater be seen!

But this must. be the work of grace. We must, be born again, or' else our proud spirits will never be meek. And if we have been born again, let it be our joy, as long as we live, to show that, we axe the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, with whom gracious words I close my discourse: "Come unto me, all ye that, labor and are heavy laden, and I will give, you rest. Take my yoke, upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart., and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.." So may it be, for Christ's sake! Amen.

## Key Scripture:

### [Galatians 5:22-23](#)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, / gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

**Colossians 3:12**

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with hearts of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

**Matthew 5:5**

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

**James 1:21**

Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and every expression of evil, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save your souls.

**Romans 2:29**

No, a man is a Jew because he is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise does not come from men, but from God.

**1 Timothy 2:9-10**

Likewise, I want the women to adorn themselves with respectable apparel, with modesty, and with self-control, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, / but with good deeds, as is proper for women who profess to worship God.

**Ephesians 4:2**

with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

**Philippians 4:5**

Let your gentleness be apparent to all. The Lord is near.

**2 Corinthians 4:16**

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, yet our inner self is being renewed day by day.

**Titus 3:2**

to malign no one, and to be peaceable and gentle, showing full consideration to everyone.

***"I am meek"***

**Matthew 11:29**

*"the meekness and gentleness of Christ"*

2 Cor. 10:1

*"a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price."*

1 Peter 3:4

**Meekness has always been God's way for man.**

**Job:** God "sets on high those who are lowly, and those who mourn are lifted to safety" (5:11).

"He [the Lord] leads the humble in justice, and He teaches the humble His way" (Ps. 25:9).

"walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love" (Eph. 4:1–2).

"put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (Col. 3:12).

*“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city”  
(Prov. 16:32).*

Vers. 3 and 4 refer to men in their relation to God; ver. 6, to say the least, includes the relation of men to God; what has ver. 5 to do here if it refers solely to the relation of men to men? It would have come very naturally either before or after ver. 9 (“the peacemakers”); but why here? The reason, however, for the position of the Beatitude lies in the true conception of meekness. While the thought is here primarily that of meekness exhibited towards men (as is evident from the implied contrast in they shall inherit the earth), yet meekness towards men is closely connected with, and is the result of, meekness towards God. This is not exactly humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη, which, as regards God, is equivalent to a sense of creatureliness or dependence; cf. Trench, 'Syn.,' § 42.). Meekness is rather the attitude of the soul towards another when that other is in a state of activity towards it. It is the attitude of the disciple to the teacher when teaching; of the son to the father when exercising his paternal authority; of the servant to the master when giving him orders. It is therefore essentially as applicable to the relation of man to God as to that of man to man. It is for this reason that we find ענוּ ענוּ very frequently used of man's relation to God, in fact, more often than of man's relation to man; and this common meaning of ענוּ must be specially remembered here, where the phrase is taken directly from the Old Testament.

= Pulpit Commentary

James 1:21 certainly refers to the *meekness shown towards God in receiving his word.*

(MEEKNESS) IS IT AN INWROUGHT GRACE OF THE SOUL; AND THE EXERCISES OF IT ARE FIRST AND CHIEFLY TOWARDS GOD (MATTHEW 11:29; JAMES 1:21). IT IS THAT TEMPER OF SPIRIT IN WHICH WE ACCEPT HIS DEALINGS WITH US AS GOOD, AND THEREFORE WITHOUT DISPUTING OR RESISTING; AND IT IS CLOSELY LINKED WITH THE ταπεινοφροσύνη, AND FOLLOWS DIRECTLY UPON IT (EPHESIANS 4:2; COLOSSIANS 3:12; CF. ZEPHANIAH 3:12), BECAUSE IT IS ONLY THE HUMBLE HEART WHICH IS ALSO THE MEEK; AND WHICH, AS SUCH, DOES NOT FIGHT AGAINST GOD, AND MORE OR LESS STRUGGLE AND CONTEND WITH HIM."

- Pulpit Commentary

## Surely a startling paradox!

THAT THE MEEK SHOULD FIND A FOREMOST PLACE IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS VERY INTELLIGIBLE, BUT "INHERIT THE EARTH"—THE LAND OF CANAAN OR ANY OTHER PART OF THIS PLANET—IS IT NOT A DELUSIVE PROMISE? NOT ALTOGETHER. IT IS AT LEAST TRUE AS A DOCTRINE OF *MORAL TENDENCY*. MEEKNESS AFTER ALL IS A POWER EVEN IN THIS WORLD, A "WORLD-CONQUERING PRINCIPLE" (THOLUCK).

- The Expositor's Greek

for the most part, (mEEK are those )  
whom the world tramples on.

▪ Bengal

They may not indeed be advanced to honour or affluence; nor can they expect to be without troubles in this fallen world, subjected as it is to vanity and misery for the sin of man; but the calamities of life, and the various afflictions and trials which they meet with, being received with a quiet spirit, a resigned, patient, and contented mind, are hardly felt, while the blessings of Providence, through the gratitude they feel for them, are tasted and enjoyed in all their sweetness and comfort. – Benson Commentary

Meekness is patience in the reception of injuries. – Barnes

They did not press their rights through thick and thin, or trample down the rights of others to secure their own... Meekness is the reception of injuries with a belief that God will vindicate us.

**"Vengeance is his; he will repay,"** [Romans 12:19](#).

– Barnes

Meekness produces peace... It comes from a heart too great to be moved by little insults.

– Barnes

*He that is constantly ruffled; that suffers every little insult or injury to throw him off his guard and to raise a storm of passion within, is at the mercy of every mortal that chooses to disturb him. – Barnes*

In the time of our Saviour they were in the constant habit of using the Old Testament, where this promise perpetually occurs, and they used it "as a proverbial expression to denote any great blessing, perhaps as the sum of all blessings," [Psalm 37:20](#); [Isaiah 60:21](#).

– Barnes

OUR SAVIOR USED IT IN THIS SENSE, AND MEANT TO SAY, NOT THAT THE MEEK WOULD OWN GREAT PROPERTY OR HAVE MANY LANDS, BUT THAT THEY WOULD POSSESS SPECIAL BLESSINGS. – Barnes

The Jews also considered the land of Canaan as a type of heaven...

When our Savior uses this language here, he means that the meek shall be received into his kingdom, and partake of its blessings here, and of the glories of the heavenly Canaan hereafter. – Barnes

Meekness towards God necessarily issues in meekness towards men.  
– Pulpit Commentary

Here meekness is to be considered, not as a moral virtue, but as a Christian grace, a fruit of the Spirit of God; which was eminently in Christ, and is very ornamental to believers; and of great advantage and use to them, in hearing and receiving the word; in giving an account of the reason of the hope that is in them; in instructing and restoring such, who have backslidden, either in principle or practice; and in the whole of their lives and conversations; and serves greatly to recommend religion to others: such who are possessed of it, and exercise it, are well pleasing to God; – Gill

Another word (**mEEK/mEEKness**), Christianity has lifted to a higher plane, and made the symbol of a **higher good**. Its primary meaning is mild, gentle. It was applied to inanimate things, as light, wind, sound, sickness. It was used of a horse; gentle...

*The meekness of the Christian springs from a sense of the inferiority of the creature to the Creator, and especially of the sinful creature to the holy God.*

**forgiveness and restoration nowhere attach to the classical word. They belong exclusively to Christian meekness, which thus shows itself allied to love.**

- Vincent's Word Studies

## **INHERITANCE:**

**While Jewish inheritance customs were linked to family blood lines, Greek and Roman laws also provided for the disposition of family**

possessions through the adoption of an heir. The Scriptures transform the concept of inheritance to include the acquisition of spiritual blessings and promises from God.

In the theological sense, to inherit means to "receive an irrevocable gift" with an emphasis on the special relationship between the benefactor and the recipients.

The focus of the inheritance concept in the Old Testament is God's promise to Abraham. The land of Canaan was bequeathed to him and his descendants as an eternal possession ( [Gen 12:7](#) ). Each family in Israel was apportioned its own inheritance as an inalienable possession (Josh13-31) and given the task to occupy the land ( [Judges 1:3](#) ).

As the biblical history of Israel unfolds, the promised inheritance specifies a righteous remnant who will inherit the world as an everlasting possession ( [Psalm 2:8](#) ; [Isa 54:3](#) ; [Dan 7:14](#) ).

**Ephesians 1:11** says, *"In [Christ] we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will"* (ESV).

*"Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory"* (**Romans 8:17**)

Other passages include **Colossians 3:24** and **Hebrews 9:15**.

**First Peter 1:4** - *we have been born again "into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you."*

*"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all" ([2 Corinthians 4:17](#)).*

**[Revelation 21:4](#) ...our inheritance: "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." God and man will dwell together.**

*"Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup; / you make my lot secure. / The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; / surely I have a delightful inheritance" ([Psalm 16:5-6](#)).*

### **THE NATION IS DESCRIBED AS GOD'S INHERITANCE**

( [1 Kings 8:51](#) [1 Kings 8:53](#) ; [Psalm 78:71](#) ; [Isa 19:25](#) ; [Zech 2:12](#) )

whom the Lord will never forsake ( [Psalm 94:14](#) ).

### **THE LORD IS CONVERSELY DESCRIBED AS THE INHERITANCE OF THE NATION**

**THE LEGAL-HISTORICAL MILIEU OF THE FIRST CENTURY PROVIDED AN ARRAY OF INHERITANCE TRADITIONS. JEWISH, GRECO-HELLENISTIC, AND ROMAN INHERITANCE LAWS DIFFERED GREATLY IN THE MEANING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR TRADITIONS.**

as in the Old Testament, almost all occurrences of the terms for inheritance in the New Testament are theological ( [Luke 12:13](#) ; is the lone exception ).

Since all believers are children of God they are necessarily heirs of God ( [Rom 8:17](#) ; [Gal 4:7](#) ). It follows naturally that Christians are also heirs along with Abraham and Christ ( [Gal 3:29](#) ). They receive their inheritance by faith as did Abraham ( [Rom 4:13-14](#) ) and share in the inheritance with Christ as sons ( [Rom 8:17](#) ).

### **What Is the Inheritance?**

Throughout the New Testament, a striking promise for believers is simply "the inheritance" ( [Acts 20:32](#) ; [26:18](#) ; [Ephesians 1:14](#) [Ephesians 1:18](#) ; [Col 3:24](#) ). Generally,

the promise refers to the possession of salvation ( [Heb 1:14](#) ). The believer's inheritance is described more specifically as eternal and joyful existence with God. Believers are promised "an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you" ( [1 Peter 1:4](#) ). Inheriting the "world to come" is a guarantee for all those who belong to God's family.

**The apostle Paul employs the inheritance metaphor more than any other New Testament writer. For him, the object of the inheritance is the kingdom of God. He never states exactly what constitutes the believer's inheritance of the kingdom, but asserts emphatically that unbelievers will not inherit the kingdom ( [1 Cor 6:9-10](#) ; [Gal 5:21](#) ; [Eph 5:5](#) ).**

*The Bible is clear that inheriting eternal life is synonymous with entering the kingdom. At the judgment, the righteous will inherit the kingdom ( [Matt 25:34](#) ) but the wicked will be eternally tormented ( [Matt 25:46](#) ). The finality of the separation of those outside of the family of God is clearly seen in their lack of a share in God's inheritance.*

*The concept of the believer's inheritance highlights the dignity of the family relationship of the believer in Christ. No higher position or greater wealth can an individual acquire than to become an heir of God through faith in Christ.*

**William E. Brown**

- Baker's Evangelical Dictionary