

“Wonderful News for the Gentle”

A BETTER LIFE Sermon Series | Week Three | Newbreak Church

September 19th, 2021

This week is about how Jesus encourages us to join Him in the way of gentleness, which leads to inheriting the world.

For more insights relating to this week’s sermon, see <https://newbreak.church/blog/>. We post a new blog every Friday which coincides with the sermon passage or theme from that day.

Start Here

- What is something seasonal that you wish was year-round? (Examples: Trick-or-treating being once a month, Christmas lights, eggnog, etc.)
- What is the worst movie you have ever seen? Why was it so bad?

Going Deeper Into the Message

Greatness comes from growing in gentleness, not from grabbing power.

Point 1 – God celebrates those who lead the way through gentleness.

Wonderful news for the meek! You’re going to inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:5, N.T. Wright’s translation)

It seems incorrect to think of the meek/gentle as the ones who “inherit the earth.” Let’s be honest, if this beatitude was written by rulers of the world it would say:

Wonderful news for the assertive and oppressive! The world is yours for the taking!

But Jesus does not take notes on the way the world does things. As the true and good King, He shows us a better way. The way of gentleness. Jesus’ Kingdom is an upside down Kingdom that values leading with gentleness over leading by force.

After all, we can be gentle and still one day be entrusted with the whole world since the earth is not taken by force but is an inheritance to be received. The earth belongs to the Lord (Psalm 24:1) and so it is His to give, not ours to take. So, at the end of the day, who will God give the earth to? *The gentle*.

One can be strong and also meek because meek does not mean weak. It takes great strength to remain under control.

- It's not being a "doormat"
- It's not blind compliance
- It's not staying quiet about evil or injustice

It is about the method of how one counters the evil in the world, not about how they stand idly by in apathy. It's about the method of how we respond. (Think of the way a loving parent tenderly corrects or guides his or her children.)

So near and dear is gentleness to the heart of Jesus that the same Greek adjective (*praus*) appears in Matthew 11:29 when Jesus describes His heart as "gentle," and in 21:5 when Matthew narrates Jesus' coming to us as "gentle" leading into passion week. The noun form of the word "gentleness" (*prautēs*) is even a fruit of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives (Galatians 5:23).

The promises in the beatitudes (the second part of each one) all give different aspects of our ultimate hope as believers. Note too that receiving "the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3 & 10) is the same as "inheriting the earth" (5:5) because the kingdom of heaven will one day pervade the earth, fulfilling the prayer Jesus taught us to pray: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- What is your understanding of gentleness/meekness? How was this talked about growing up? Do you have a positive or negative view of it?
- Jesus was meek and gentle, but certainly *not weak*. Think about Jesus' life and example, specifically. What can we learn from Him in how to see gentleness as a strength and not a weakness?

- What do you find encouraging about the promise of this beatitude (“inheriting the earth”)?

Read: Matthew 26:47-54

Point 2 – Our role is not to force God’s kingdom, but to reinforce it.

We may not know the complete plan of God. But we do know what He wants us to do. He wants us to be His witnesses throughout the world of what Jesus has done for us, how He has redeemed us. When we focus on telling others of God’s great love for us, of Jesus’ sacrifice for us, we can trust that God will do the rest for His kingdom and glory.

God does not call us to enforce His will. He is the Almighty and He controls the armies of heaven. Sometimes it’s hard to sit by and wait for His timing. But we know that: “The Lord is slow to anger but great in power; the Lord will not leave the guilty unpunished. His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet” (Nahum 1:3, NIV). We can trust His timing. When we believe that, it’s easier to be calm with people, to see them as Christ sees them, and to be gentle with them as we patiently wait to see God’s will worked out in our lives.

We are to love others as Christ loved us. We are to be gentle as God is gentle with us. We are to give answers to those who ask, with gentleness and respect. He calls us to love His people. He calls us to be His hands and feet here on earth, to help the poor, take care of the widows and orphans, and bind up the brokenhearted. We are to follow the example of Christ in our lives. We are to turn the other cheek. We are to pray for our enemies and leave the judgment to God, in His perfect timing. As Oswald Chambers said, “it is the Lord’s honor at stake in our lives and not our own.”

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Are you gentle with others, or are you hard on others? Why? Are you gentle on yourself or hard on yourself? Why?
- Is there someone in your life whom you have not been gentle with in the past? How could you make that right this week?

- How can you show the strength of Christ this week, while also showing the gentleness of Christ? What does this look like to you?

—ACTIVITY—

Psalm 37 is an Old Testament parallel with Matthew 5:5. Read (especially) the verses below, and discuss (or journal) how God's way brings about His blessing.

How does this Psalm pave the way for Matthew 5:5? And in what ways does it compare and contrast between the original promise and the new covenant promise?

→ ³ Trust in the Lord and do good; **dwell in the land** and enjoy safe pasture. ⁴ Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:3-4)

→ ⁸ Refrain from **anger and turn from wrath** ; do not fret—it leads only to evil. ⁹ For those who are evil will be destroyed, but **those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land** . (vv. 8-9)

→ ¹⁰ A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. ¹¹ **But the meek will inherit the land** and enjoy peace and prosperity. (vv. 10-11)

→ ¹⁴ The wicked draw the sword and bend the bow to bring down the poor and needy, to slay those whose ways are upright. ¹⁵ But their swords will pierce their own hearts, and their bows will be broken. (vv. 14-15)

—FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—

How are you going to think differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?

What is one thing you are going to change in your life in light of the sermon?

BONUS: For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids?