

Blessed are the Meek
Matthew 5:5 with Matthew 6:19-34; Ps. 37

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 2-28-2010

**Introduction – How did such a great virtue come to mean,
“being a doormat”?**

One of the counseling books that I looked at this past week told about a parody of Christian wimps written by J. Upton Dickson. It's in a booklet called *Cower Power*. And he writes about a society he has created that these wimps really ought to join. It's called DOORMATS, which is an acronym that stands for Dependent Organization of Really Meek and Timid Souls – if there are no objections.” And he says that their motto ought to be, “the meek shall inherit the earth – if that's OK with everybody.” I think most people would recognize that his poking fun might be a fair criticism of *some* branches of Christianity, which are fast becoming a bunch of mild-mannered people, teaching other mild-mannered people how to become more mild-mannered. But it is certainly not a fair criticism of this beatitude. A doormat Christianity does not fit into the context. It doesn't fit the immediate context of inheriting the earth, and it certainly does not fit the Psalm that this verse is quoted from. The meek person in Psalm 37 is face-to-face with wicked warriors, and does not back down. And because of his trust and faithfulness, six times that Psalm says that he will inherit the earth.

It is unfortunate, but frequently when I hear the word “meek” used, it is used as a synonym for timid or doormat. But if you look at the two people who were said to be the meekest people in the Bible (Moses and Jesus), you know that this cannot be Scripture's definition of meekness. Immediately after describing Jesus as meek and riding on a foal of a donkey you have the passage where He is overthrowing the tables and whipping the moneychangers out of the temple. What's with that? Well, that is meekness. Jesus breaks all the stereotypes of meekness. Interestingly, Jesus deliberately challenged the political leaders over their unbiblical Sabbath laws by engaging in civil disobedience. When the magistrates said that He couldn't heal on the Sabbath, he went out of His way to heal on the Sabbath and to challenge their ungodly laws. What's with that? It must be meekness to God because Jesus said, “**I am meek**” (Matt 11:29), and Paul admonished us to have the meekness of Christ (2 Cor. 10:1).

Now while it is true that some protestors today are not meek at all, Jesus protested as an act of meekness to the Father. And we will be seeing

shortly that whom you are meek to makes all the difference in the world. Some people have a meek response to the wrong people, and it gets them into trouble. The Emergent Church has some of the nicest pastors, and many of them are thought to be meek. But their meekness is a toleration of what God finds intolerable. It refuses to mourn over lawlessness, which means that they are not meek toward *God*. They may be meek toward man, but not toward God. Much of American meekness flows from peer pressure. But when we start with the bankruptcy of beatitude #1, where is our vision going to be? It's going to be on Jesus. He alone can be the source of meekness, and He alone can define what kind of meekness he is talking about. So as we go through these beatitudes, you are going to see that the order is so important.

I. The Meek - What does it mean to be meek?

A. Translation of the Greek word (praüs) is difficult: gentle, lowly, humble, quietness of spirit, meek, forbearing, yielding and gracious.

But let's start by defining our terms. What does meekness mean? Every Bible dictionary I have looked at has expressed frustration with communicating the meaning into one English word. Here are some of the ways the word has been translated: gentle, lowly, humble, quietness of spirit, meek, forbearing, yielding, and gracious. Those are eight nuances of this word.

B. Literal Rendering of the Greek (praüs) - "To Be Tamed." It is "power under control" – the concept of meekness must have strength combined with the above translations.

But each of the dictionaries points out that none of those terms should convey the idea of weakness in our minds. It is *strength* in submission, *strength* expressed in gentleness, *strength* expressed in humility, *strength* that yields, *strength* that is forbearing, and *strength* that is gracious. If you take strength out of it, you do not have meekness.

In your outline you have some pictures of meek horses.¹ I think that Frisian horses are some of the most beautiful horses on earth. I love Goliath in the movie, LadyHawk. That's the horse on the top right hand side. Every time I have seen that movie I have watched that horse in amazement. It is a splendid animal. And the Scripture would call that animal meek because he was totally at the will of his master. Now it's true that Goliath scared the daylights out of Philippe, didn't he? But even Philippe could ride him if the master wanted it.

¹ See page 20 for outline.

In contrast, the horse in Mask of Zoro was not totally meek because he would mess around with the young Zoro, and not obey him. In one scene the would-be Zoro tried to jump out of a window onto the horse, and the horse deliberately moved and let him fall on the ground. But the other Zoro movie had a similar horse that was at one with his master. That is a picture of meek. And the horses were not necessarily meek with strangers. Their meekness was their unqualified obedience to the master. They were thoroughly tamed.

And that's the basic idea of the Greek word *praiis*. It means tamed. The Greeks used this term "meek" to describe any wild animals that had been tamed into submission. A meek horse was a horse that had been trained to instantly move to the slightest touch of the bridle, or commands or whistles.

A stallion may be incredibly dangerous, and very powerful, but when that stallion is meek or tamed it is gentle enough for a child to ride, and so the word "gentle" is a perfectly appropriate translation. When the master approaches, rather than rearing up and trying to kill the master, the stallion now has quietness of spirit, so that is an appropriate translation. He is yielding his strength to the master's desires; so yielding is a good translation. In other words, in both the secular and the Biblical Greek, meekness is always seen as power expressed in these eight ways under the master. If you think of Goliath or Tornado as a picture of meek, you've got a good picture.

Here is how R. J. Rushdoony pulls together the shades of meaning in describing the meekness of Moses:

The meek are the redeemed whom God has burdened, oppressed, and broken to harness, so that they are tamed and workable. God subjected Moses to a more rigorous discipline than any other believer of his day, and Moses accepted that oppression, grew in terms of it, and became disciplined and strong. Hence Moses was the meekest man of his age. Meekness is thus not mousiness, but disciplined strength in and under God. . . . The blessed meek are the tamed of God, those harnessed to His law-word and [to His] calling, who shall inherit the earth (Matt. 5:5). The blessed meek are those who submit to God's dominion, have therefore dominion over themselves, and are capable of exercising dominion over the earth. They therefore inherit the earth.

C. The connection of meekness to dominion

So we've looked at the word "meek." Let's now look at the last part of the beatitude. Can you see why Jesus said, "**Happy are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth**"? The Old Testament made it clear that any people who acted like wild stallions would not inherit the earth. So there are two extremes to be avoided. If Christians were wild (on the one hand) or doormats (on the other hand), Christianity would have been extinguished in the first century. But because meekness is being tamed of God and implies strength under control, it is very logically connected to inheriting planet earth through the Dominion Mandate (which gives our responsibilities for science, technology, and all of life) and the Great Commission (which applies grace to all of life). We will never fulfill those two commissions through timidity. Those who are bold for the Lord, and like Caleb, look at impossible mountains and say, "Lord, give me this mountain" will inherit the earth.

Listen to this description that God *Himself* gives of a meek war-horse who strikes terror into the enemy. This is from Job 39:19-25, and it is God speaking of the wonder of this horse to Job. This horse is not distracted from the master's commands by trumpets, arrows, dangers, or anything else. He's only got ears for his master. And he struck terror into his enemies. God says,

Job 39:19 "Have you given the horse strength?

Have you clothed his neck with thunder?

Job 39:20 Can you frighten him like a locust?

His majestic snorting strikes terror.

Job 39:21 He paws in the valley, and rejoices in *his* strength;

He gallops into the clash of arms.

Job 39:22 He mocks at fear, and is not frightened;

Nor does he turn back from the sword.

Job 39:23 The quiver rattles against him,

The glittering spear and javelin.

Job 39:24 He devours the distance with fierceness and rage;

Nor does he come to a halt because the trumpet *has* sounded.

Job 39:25 At the blast of the trumpet he says, "Aha!"

He smells the battle from afar,

The thunder of captains and shouting.

If the whole church were filled with men, women, and children who were meek in this strong sense of the term, the meek would indeed inherit the earth. Amen?

D. The connection of meekness to the previous beatitudes

Now here is the problem: some people are strong; they are not doormats; but they are not strong for the *Lord*. They are sometimes strong in

stubborn insistence of their own will. They are wild stallions. Others are tamed, but they have been tamed by Satan to do his will. Others have been tamed by social conventions, or are tamed by fear of what others will think. Those are all counterfeits that do not lead to the lasting happiness and fulfillment of this beatitude. It's in being meek *to the Lord* that our strength is unleashed to claim planet earth. So there is a logical order in these beatitudes. If you don't start with poverty, there is automatically going to be a tendency to have counterfeit graces.

If meekness is an utter yieldedness to God, then it cannot exist without mourning about our independence, self-reliance, or rebellion. Since meekness has submission within its definition, if we started with meekness, it could be submission to the wrong thing, and gentleness with the wrong people. Buddhist monks are sometimes said to be meek, but it is a kind of works righteousness rather than a poorness of spirit that depends on Jesus. I already mentioned that the Emergent Church's meekness is a toleration of what God finds intolerable. Submission to peer pressure is a kind of meekness that violates the first two beatitudes.

II. Happiness through meekness (“Blessed” - Ps. 22:26; 25:9; 149:4; Zeph. 2:3)

So we have looked at the word “meek.” We have also looked at the last part of the beatitude. With that as a background I think you can also see why the *first* part of the beatitudes is true, and why it is the meek that are said to be blessed or happy, and why a non-meek person is not fulfilled. Just think of anything that is untamed. A wild animal doesn't want to be tamed and may fight the process that the trainer puts it through, but the end result is wonderful. Take a look at Matthew 11:28, which shows the process of making an ox meek. **“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle [that's the word for “meek” *praüs*] and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”**

The paradox of Christ's words are that when a person is wild and without the yoke of Christ on his neck, he will be weary and heavy laden, whereas when a person wears Christ's yoke, he will be energized and rested. Many think that disobedience to Christ is freedom, but when we fail to be the tamed of God, we end up being torn and bruised, mangy, with smelly hides that are flea infested, ill, with burs in our fur and thorns in our feet, and under the bondage of sin. The wild animals are not usually the healthiest of animals. They die young. Their teeth fall out; they get sores. And Christ is

saying that the only way to find fulfillment, rest, and satisfaction in life is by wearing the yoke of meekness and being tamed by God. And I tell you, we need to start early with our children. When your one year old shows defiance in facial expressions or body language, or mopes, or whines, and you let him or her get away with it, you are reinforcing wildness and actually training that child to be wild rather than meek. Lamentations 3:27 says, **“It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth.”** He is saying that it is good for a child to learn this meekness or this taming in his youth. And you parents are the stewards under God responsible to do some of this training with the yoke of meekness. It’s much easier to train a colt than a full-grown horse. You can start very young. As soon as our children were able to toddle, we would give them assignments of fetching diapers and training them to be meek in actions and attitudes.

I bought a horse out in Ethiopia that was anything but meek. The only time you could get him to run was when he was coming home to get his oats. You could whip him, kick him with your heels, and he wouldn’t budge. Sometimes I had to literally drag him by the harness because the mouth was the only part sensitive enough for him to pay attention. He was too stubborn to learn. It was as if he would rather be miserable than obedient. He would run like the wind when he was coming home because that was where his treasure was – his oats.

And many times we as Christians are like that horse. We obey, but it is grudgingly. We drag our feet. It is not from the heart. I never let my kids get away with that kind of grudging obedience or forced obedience. They tried, but it was an automatic recipe for boot camp. I wanted them to joyfully do something even before it was commanded. And I told them that they would only get ahead in business if they started anticipating the desires of those who were in authority, and went the extra mile. Now obviously, during the boot camps, there was initially a lot of outward conformity imposed before they caught the vision. But our desire for our children should be that every ounce of their strength would be at God’s disposal. You are ultimately training them not just to be meek to you, but also to be meek to the Lord. We are not meek if we do not turn at the slightest touch of the reigns to our neck. And consequently we miss out on the joy of galloping with the wind; we miss out on the happiness of feeling the master’s caress after we have done well, and hearing Him say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.” We trade in the happiness of kingdom living for the misery of discipline.

You see, God is in the business of making tamed, useful, Christians. And when we do not cooperate, He inflicts more discipline. When you are not meek, you cannot experience the joy of Kingdom living because God

disciplines every one whom He loves. Listen to Psalm 32. It describes the meekness that we are called to with the metaphor of an untrained horse. **“Do not be like the horse or like the mule . . . which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him.”** He says that it isn’t meekness to have to be drug around with bit and bridle. Meekness is described in the preceding verse: **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.”** No need even for reins. You are to be so in tune with the master that all you have to do is see something in His eye; see His desire, and you do it. His eye directs you. That’s what we want in our children – get them to anticipate the desires of those who are in authority over them. This is why meekness is said to be such a desirable trait in the Scripture. It is the meek that have happiness. Matthew 5 says, **“Happy are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”** Meek, well-disciplined children are the happiest children. Psalm 22:9 says, **“The meek shall eat and be satisfied.”** So this is not simply an outer, fake happiness, but a true inner satisfaction. Ps. 25:9 says, **“The meek will he guide in judgment.”** It makes sense that He would only give His guidance for judgment to the meek. You take your favorite horses to your most important places because you can trust them. Psalm 149:4 says, **“He will beautify the meek with victory.”** Psalm 37:11 says, **“The meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in abundance of peace.”** If you want to be happy in kingdom living, Zephaniah says, **“seek righteousness, seek meekness.”**

III. Christ's exposition of this beatitude (Matthew 6:19-34)

So we have looked at the three parts of this beatitude. Now, let's quickly go to Christ's exposition of this beatitude in Matthew 6:19-34.² I won't spend a lot of time on this, but I think this will help you to see some of the obstacles to truly being meek. And you might be surprised by a couple of these.

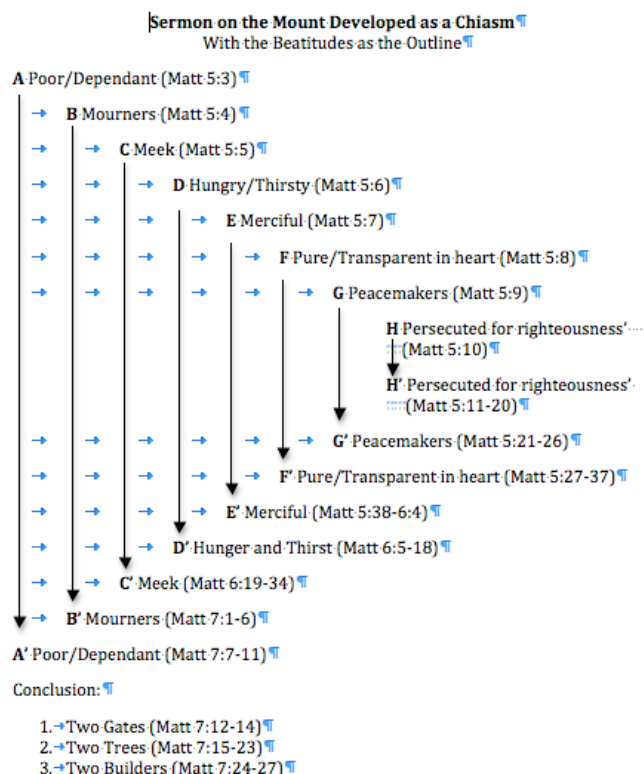
I think this beatitude is wonderfully summarized in verse 33 – “**But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness** [that's being meek, right?], **and all these things shall be added to you**” [that's inheriting the earth]. But we get short-circuited from seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness in so many ways.

A. The tamed follow God's goals and have Him as their treasure (v. 19-21)

The first two issues that Christ addresses are: our goal and our treasure. Starting to read in verse 19.

Matthew 6:19 ¶ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;

² In our first sermon we demonstrated how the beatitudes are the chiasmic outline of the Sermon on the Mount. Here is the outline:



Matthew 6:20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Just imagine yourself riding a horse into battle, but your horse keeps turning around like my horse did in Ethiopia. And he wants to go home to eat the oats. The oats are his treasure. His treasure was not in my “Well done though good and faithful horse.” If he were looking to please me, I *would* have pleased him when he got home. But because his treasure was in the oats, I had to take oats away for a season to train him to be meek.

B. The tamed follow God’s light (vv. 22-23)

The next section is verses 22-23

Matthew 6:22 ¶ “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.

Matthew 6:23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

He likens the literal eye to a lamp, and then indicates that there is an inward spiritual eye of discernment that is also a lamp. But we saw under beatitude #2 (of mourning) that we like to shut off the light. But if we extinguish the light because we don’t like what God is showing, the darkness we experience will keep us from inheriting the earth. We will stumble in darkness just like a blind man would. Meekness does not need blinders to keep him from looking around. The meek are so single eyed to the master’s desires that they follow the Lord even when they can see everything all around. So the meekness that Christ is talking about is consistent with beatitudes 1 and 2.

C. The tamed follow one master (v. 24)

Look at verse 24:

Matthew 6:24 ¶ “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Meekness can be yielding to God or it can be yielding to idols in creation. If you are meek and yielding to idols, you are fighting against God. A meek person is tamed to follow only one master. If we are still being tossed back and forth, the Master has more taming to do. The Christian life is about being tamed to serve one master with great joy – to be like Tornado or Goliath, horses that were thrilled to be running into the fray, and to be serving their master.

D. The tamed trust their master and do not worry (vv. 25-32,34)

In the description of a meek horse that I read from Job, God says that this meek horse trusts his master's commands so much that he isn't frightened by trumpet, by swords, or by anything. Fear will keep us from inheriting the earth. Verses 25-32:

Matthew 6:25 ¶ “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

Matthew 6:26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

Matthew 6:27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

Matthew 6:28 ¶ “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

Matthew 6:29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Matthew 6:30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?

Matthew 6:31 ¶ “Therefore do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?”

Matthew 6:32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

Worry will kill meekness. Worry will make us more preoccupied with self-preservation than with pleasing the master. But did Goliath or Tornado need to worry about where their next meal was coming from? No. The master took care of them. He loved them. They didn't need to worry. If a Tornado worried and bolted or shied sideways every time a problem came along, he wouldn't have been a good horse for Zoro. Worry will kill your ability to be meek. Destroy worry or it will destroy your kingdom happiness.

E. The tamed seek God's kingdom first (v. 33)

And so verse 33 says,

Matthew 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

The tamed are preoccupied with pleasing the master.

F. The tamed inherit “all these things” (v. 33)

In turn, the Master delights in causing us to inherit all these things – clothing, food, and tomorrow's needs. In fact, this beatitude can be summed up in verse 33.

IV. Inheriting the Earth – Why is it in the future tense? (“will inherit”)

A. Being the “tamed” involves training and self-sacrifice

Now I do want you to notice that both beatitude #3 and Matthew 6:33 put the inheritance in the future. The *happiness* is always present. It is present now and it is present in the future because the meek person is intent on pleasing the master and finds pleasure in pleasing the master. But the inheritance comes after the diligence of working. They *will* inherit the earth. He is not talking about inheriting the kingdom here. Beatitude 1 says that we already possess the kingdom of heaven and all of its resources. But where is that? It's in heaven. To inherit the earth, we need to pray that the kingdom of heaven would come more and more and His will would be done more and more on earth as it is in heaven. So inheriting the earth is progressive. But this means that a meek person will always be future oriented, and will be willing to have deferred gratification if it will serve the kingdom later. I think it is one of the reasons why the American church is not inheriting the earth (for the most part).

B. This beatitude is a quotation from Psalm 37.

Let's look at one more passage to fill out this picture. Turn to Psalm 37. This is the Psalm that Jesus quotes in beatitude #3, and the whole Psalm illustrates what it means to be meek. We won't have time to go through the whole Psalm, but I at least want to introduce you to it.

1. The patience of the meek (vv. 1)

Let's begin reading at verse 1.

**Psalms 37:1 ¶ Do not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.**

What is fretting? It is being upset over something that you don't have. What is envy? It is feeling bad about something you don't have. What is common to both is a lack of patience with God's timing for inheritance. You might be a young colt that is being trained, and the training seems to take so long. And other colts get to run gaily through the fields, and explore the woods, and be wild and carefree. And it's not always fun doing the right thing, but patience in training leads to a meek Olympic skater. You need patience to be able to do the things that a meek person does. If you let your children get away with impatience, you are undermining meekness in their lives.

2. The confidence of the meek (vv. 3-6)

But this same patience leads to an outlook on life that gives confidence that others do not have. We want our children to be confident, not insecure. Look at some of the expressions of confidence beginning in verse 2. Speaking of the powerful wicked, it says,

**Psalms 37:2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.**

You are confident first that the way of the untamed will not turn out well. You are not even tempted to run wild. You know what happens in the wild – things get eaten. But if the church stays meek, it will win the victory – the gates of hell will not prevail against it. Verse 3:

**Psalms 37:3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.**

He is saying that when the going gets tough, don't forsake your calling. Take your dominion mandate seriously and dwell in the land. If you are a horse, you trust Him that the safest place to be is under the master's direction. You can be confident in his guidance. Verse 4:

**Psalms 37:4 Delight yourself also in the LORD,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.**

When our hearts are in tune with the Lord's will, then God will use us mightily and He will answer our prayers. You will have confidence in God, and the closer you get to God through training, the more confidence you will gain.

3. The yieldedness of the meek (vv. 5-6)

The third key to meekness is yieldedness. Verses 5-6 teach us that *yieldedness* brings happiness.

**Psalms 37:5 Commit your way to the LORD,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring *it* to pass.**

**Psalms 37:6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday.**

Personal righteousness and social justice will be accomplished. That's a part of inheriting the earth. But it comes by yielding yourself to God.

4. The happiness and the inheritance of the meek (vv. 4,11)

And of course, the Psalm speaks of the happiness of the meek. I've only listed a couple verses, but it is all throughout this psalm. Let me pull out a few phrases: "Delight... desires of your heart... delight themselves in the abundance of peace... satisfied... blessed... delights... blessed."

But the context of that happiness is so instructive. The whole Psalm describes persecution - hardly what we would expect to see in a beatitude speaking of happiness. Despite the fact that the enemies appear to be winning at this stage, he says six times that the meek shall inherit the earth and will never be moved. “Stay meek. Stay meek.”

5. How is this meekness cultivated?

I think by now all of us are convinced that it is good to be meek. We say to ourselves, “I want to go to the spiritual Olympics. I want to be trained. I want to be a meek horse.”

But we know our own hearts. We know that this is not the natural state of our hearts. How do we cultivate meekness? It’s got to start with recognizing our poverty (beatitude #1) and by faith laying claim to the meekness of Christ. It moves to mourning over anything that hinders us from being a Tornado in the hands of the master. But this Psalm also gives us other hints. Let me summarize under four points.

a) Put off negative attitudes of anxiety, frustration, and bitterness (vv. 1, 7, 8, etc)

First is a put-off and second is a put-on. We must put off all negative attitudes that will keep us from being focused on serving the Lord. Verse 1 warns us about fretting over the wicked, or being envious of them. Verse 8 says, “**Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret – it only causes harm**” I think of the horses that were trained for battle. If they went running off every time a sword got too close, the rider would never be able to accomplish anything. If they started bucking every time a fly bit them, it would be pretty frustrating for the rider. The horse was trained to leave the judgment of when to charge and when to run entirely to the rider. He trusted the rider rather than fretting. We are to do the same, and because God is in control, we can put off fear, anger, bitterness, and other negative emotions and trust Him.

b) Put on the positive attitudes of trust, rest, relaxing in God’s sovereignty, delight (vv. 3,4,5,6,7)

But it’s not enough to put off bad attitudes. We also need to daily put on positive attitudes of trust, rest, looking to the future, relaxing in God’s sovereignty, delight in His will, etc. Verse 3 says to trust, to do good, to stay put when everyone else is fleeing, and to feed on His faithfulness. That’s your personal devotions. You must learn to feed on Him. Verse 4 says that we need to learn how to “**delight yourself also in the LORD.**” Goliath

didn't just delight in being taken care of in the stable. He was made to run with the master, and he found delight in being with the master. Verse 7 says, **"Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him."** Verse 23: **"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way."** And if we had time, we could go through other positive attitudes that the meek person must put on in this Psalm.

c) Develop meekness by grace, and not by law (vv. 3,5,6,7, etc)

Third, develop meekness by grace, and not by law. This is especially important when we think of this attribute in our children. Let me illustrate: There are two ways you can tame an animal. My Dad was hired out as a Broncbuster in Alberta and he tamed many horses. But my Dad never broke their spirit. He has seen some animals that have been starved and beaten and have been broken by cruelty and they ended up just walked around listlessly. Now sure, that animal goes wherever you lead it; but it doesn't have any initiative; doesn't have any spunk of life. Its life was a mere existence. That doesn't glorify God.

That is not what God calls us to. God is looking for the heart - not merely outward conformity. Obviously outward conformity for our children is essential, but it is not enough. There is no *Gospel* meekness unless the heart is reached. Do you want *Gospel* meekness for your children? Read *Shepherding a Child's Heart*. When that tamed heart of meekness motivates us to pour every ounce of strength that we have into following God's will, we find that our lives fulfill their ultimate potential. It is not the wild animal that takes dominion but the harnessed one. Nor is it the horse that is crushed in spirit that makes a good racehorse. It's the meek horse that is the great racehorse. And we can beat ourselves with the law, or beat others with the law and never achieve *Gospel* meekness. God wants us to achieve meekness where (as Psalm 37 words it) we delight ourselves in Him. Meekness enables us to have a delightful relationship with God. So this involves law, but it is always law through Christ and through the Gospel. Constantly work with your children to be doing these things for God. That way it won't only be meekness to you as God's representative. It will also be meekness to the God you represent.

**d) Realize that the final goal for meekness is not
“getting along,” but is inheriting the earth (vv.
3,4,5,6,9,11,18,19,22,25,26,27,28,29,34,37)**

So we have looked at a “put-off,” a “put-on,” and the fact that we must be Gospel-focused. The fourth way to cultivate meekness is to cast vision. Olympic athletes are driven by vision. The goal of meekness is not just for personal development. Nor is it just to get along with everyone. It is to inherit the earth. If we are not desirous of seeing the Dominion Mandate fulfilled, and if we do not know what our part in that mandate is, then we are not yet meek. Sixteen times this Psalm promises an inheritance of tangible parts of this earth if we will only be meek. It’s a goal far more worthwhile than most Olympians seek (though it could include the Olympics since inheriting the earth includes every square inch of planet earth). Let me just read a smattering of these goals that God holds out to the meek in Psalm 37. I won’t read the Scripture references; I will just read the phrases beginning in verse 3:

Psalms 37:3 ... feed on His faithfulness.

Psalms 37:4 ... He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Psalms 37:5 ...He shall bring *it* to pass.

Psalms 37:9 ...inherit the earth.

Psalms 37:11 ... inherit the earth,

And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Psalms 37:18 ...their inheritance shall be forever.

Psalms 37:19 ... in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

Psalms 37:22 ... inherit the earth...

Psalms 37:25 I have not seen ...his descendants begging bread.

Psalms 37:26 ...his descendants *are* blessed.

Psalms 37:27 ...dwell forevermore.

Psalms 37:28 ...They are preserved forever...

Psalms 37:29 The righteous shall inherit the land,

And dwell in it forever.

Psalms 37:34 ... inherit the land...

Psalms 37:37 ... the future of *that* man *is* peace.

God wants our sights to be set higher than merely surviving this next week. He wants us to be like Caleb, and based on His promises to say, “Lord, give me this mountain. Here’s the next part of planet earth that I want to put under the feet of King Jesus. I want this as an inheritance.” If you have that attitude, then when you pray the pray of Jabez, it won’t be a humanistic prayer, but will glorify God.

Conclusion (taken from definitions)

1. Be teachable, not unreachable

Let me end with ten quick admonitions related to your meekness, your happiness, and your dominion inheritance. First, be teachable, but not unreachable. Meek people don't pretend to know everything. Nor do they resist change. In Matthew 11:29 Jesus says that the meek **"learn of Me."** Every day we need to search our hearts to see if we have a teachable spirit. We need to train our children to have a teachable spirit. Luke 6:40 says, **"A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher."** This is the marvelous outcome of meekness training – we become like Jesus! Brothers and sisters, we ought to desire to be like Jesus, the meekest man upon the earth.

2. Be gentle, not unpredictable and ornery

Second admonition: be gentle, not unpredictable. I had a horse that was so unpredictable that I would on occasion get hit in the head with his head. And boy did that hurt. Our boarding school had two horses that we would ride, and one of them was nasty. He would deliberately run at a gallop under a low-lying branch to try to knock you off, or would squish your leg against a fence. My horse loved to run at you with bared teeth. But that kind of person is not very useful for either God or man. The horse that spooks one minute, refuses to move another, then bolts at another time, is not a very useful horse. God wants us to be gentle, not unpredictable and ornery. It might take an hour of daily boot camp to teach your young children these principles. Do not be satisfied until God has reached their hearts and made them gentle.

3. Be an actor, not a reactor

Third, be an actor, not a reactor. Too many people react to the evil around them by getting angry, fretting, and bitter. Psalm 37 says it will only do you harm. Jesus tells us the same thing in Matthew 6. Instead, when someone does evil, overcome evil with good. When others fly off the handle, don't react. Handle it with meekness – power under control. Love is not easily provoked. You don't ignore the evil, but neither do you respond the same way.

4. Be understanding, not demanding

Fourth, be understanding, not demanding. When you are dealing with other people who are not meek, it is very easy to not be understanding. Here's what Philippians 2:3-5 says,

Philippians 2:3 *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*

Philippians 2:4 *Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

Philippians 2:5 ¶ *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,*

5. Become tender, without surrender

Fifth, become tender, without surrender. You can't please everyone, and if you are meek toward God, you cannot surrender principle. That logically means that there will be times of conflict for the meek person. But if you approach those stubborn people with gentleness and tenderness, you will be modeling meekness and be part of the process of training them. Meek people have learned the lesson of Proverbs 15:1, which says that a gentle answer turns away wrath. Trusting God to change their heart frees us up to be gentle. Meekness is learning how to disagree agreeably. So there is a balance there that some fathers need to learn – tenderness without surrender. Being meek with your wife does not mean that you let her run the show. Being meek means that you are meek to God, and God wants you to lead with gentleness, care, nurture, self-sacrifice, and tenderness. Be tender, but don't surrender Biblical principle. You can yield on non-Biblical issues, but not on Biblical principle.

6. Be humble, not a doormat

Sixth, be humble, not a doormat. Humility is absence of pride and a willingness to submit to God's will. But if God is riding you into the battlefield to resist compromise and evil, you are not going to be a doormat. God blesses the meek, but He often calls the meek into battle.

7. Be forbearing, but not uncaring

Seventh, be forbearing, but not uncaring. I think all of these are hard to achieve. It takes meekness to achieve them, and meekness comes from the throne above. Some people are so forbearing that they put up with every kind of compromise and become apathetic about sin. That's not meekness. Jesus was meek, yet He confronted sin. It's true that we need to pick our battles. It's true that we need to trust God's work at taming other Christians and be patient for His timing. But we can embrace and receive brothers in the Lord without becoming apathetic about important issues. Unfortunately, some churches try to make peace by making a hundred issues off limits to discuss. But it is possible to care about issues and still be forbearing. And that's what I like in this church – we can have disagreements but still love

each other and embrace each other. No one has to give up principle, but we have learned to be forbearing. So forbearing, but not uncaring or apathetic.

8. Be yielding, not selfish

Eighth, be yielding, not selfish. This yieldedness must be first, and foremost to God, and then it will be properly manifested towards others. If our yieldedness is directed first and foremost to man we will get in trouble. For example, some salesmen are yielding on everything (they are schmoozey), just to get a sale. Some are yielding in the family just to keep peace. Some yield principle to get a promotion, or yield on the Sabbath to gain profit. All of those forms of yielding are selfish. But a yieldedness to God that crucifies selfishness will usher us into wonderful relationships with man.

9. Be gracious, not a jerk

Ninth, be gracious, not a jerk. Graciousness is one of the ways you can translate this word. It is a strong, deliberate graciousness toward those who do not deserve it. If we respond to jerks by being jerks ourselves we lose the Lord's blessing. It takes grace to respond to a jerk with strong, gracious, firmness. You don't have to yell at your kids. You can approach them yet another time, and very gently say, "Son, you know that was not right. This time it is going to be two whacks of the spanking stick. You know the rules. And if you keep it up, next time it will be three whacks. Now let's talk about this to the Lord."

10. Be tamed, not feisty

And then finally, be tamed, not feisty. If your whole goal in life is to please the master, the master will ensure that you are happy, fulfilled, and have all the kingdom assets that you need. As Psalm 37 says, "**in the days of famine they shall be satisfied**" (v. 19). Some of you are worried about America's economic future. It's OK to plan and to prepare for hard times, but it is not OK to worry. This Scripture says that even "**in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.**" "**The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way.**" (vv. 23-24). The Psalm deals with a lot of feisty people who shove others around to get their way, yet God promises that they will perish, and six times that Psalm promises that the meek will inherit the earth. May God give each of you more and more happiness, and more and more inheritance, as you seek to be the tamed of the Lord. Amen.

Before I give you your charge, let me read again Psalm 32:8: **I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. Do not be like the horse or like the mule . . . which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him.** Children of God, I charge you to put on the meekness of Christ and to be the tamed of God. And as stewards, to put the yoke of meekness on your children when they are young.

Blessed are the Meek

Matthew 5:5 with Matthew 6:19-34; Ps. 37

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 2-28-2010

Introduction – How did such a great virtue come to mean “being a doormat”?

- I. The Meek - What does it mean to be meek?
 - A. Translation of the Greek word (praüs) is difficult: gentle, lowly, humble, quietness of spirit, meek, forbearing, yielding and gracious.
 - B. Literal Rendering of the Greek (praüs) - “To Be Tamed”; “power under control” – the concept of meekness must have strength combined with the above translations.
 - C. The connection of meekness to dominion
 - D. The connection of meekness to the previous beatitudes
- II. Happiness through meekness (“Blessed” - Ps. 22:26; 25:9; 149:4; Zeph. 2:3)
- III. Christ’s exposition of this beatitude (Matthew 6:19-34)
 - A. The tamed follow God’s goals and have Him as their treasure (v. 19-21)
 - B. The tamed follow God’s light (vv. 22-23)
 - C. The tamed follow one master (v. 24)
 - D. The tamed trust their master and do not worry (vv. 25-32,34)
 - E. The tamed seek God’s kingdom first (v. 33)
 - F. The tamed inherit “all these things” (v. 33)
- IV. Inheriting the Earth – Why is it in the future tense? (“will inherit”)
 - A. Being the “tamed” involves training and self-sacrifice
 - B. This beatitude is a quotation from Psalm 37.
 1. The patience of the meek (vv. 1)
 2. The confidence of the meek (vv. 3-6)
 3. The yieldedness of the meek (vv. 5-6)
 4. The happiness and the inheritance of the meek (vv. 4,11)
 5. How is this meekness cultivated?
 - a) Put off negative attitudes of anxiety, frustration, and bitterness (vv. 1, 7, 8, etc)
 - b) Put on the positive attitudes of trust, rest, relaxing in God’s sovereignty, delight (vv. 3,4,5,6,7)
 - c) Develop meekness by grace, and not by law (vv. 3,5,6,7, etc)
 - d) Realize that the final goal for meekness is not “getting along,” but is inheriting the earth (vv. 3,4,5,6,9,11,18,19,22,25,26,27,28,29,34,37)

Conclusion (taken from definitions)

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2. Be gentle, not unpredictable and ornery
3. Be an actor, not a reactor
4. Be understanding, not demanding
5. Become tender, without surrender
6. Be humble, not a doormat
7. Be forbearing, but not unprincipled
8. Be yielding, not selfish
9. Be gracious, not a jerk
10. Be tamed, not feisty

