



St. Paul Evangelical Community Church (SPECC)

Worship Address : Cerritos High School Auditorium
12500 E. 183rd St., Cerritos, CA 90703
(Enter at Bloomfield, across Heritage Park)

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November 15, 2009

Theme: Blessed Are the Meek

Text: Matthew 5:5

Most people did not place a high value upon the spiritual character trait of meekness when Jesus spoke these words. Most Jews didn't. The Greeks and Romans certainly didn't. Things haven't changed much since then. Meekness is not a highly valued character trait in our culture either. We do not naturally connect blessing with meekness. Our culture surely does not believe that the meek shall inherit the earth. That is because our modern culture has two major misunderstandings when it comes to this spiritual character trait: (1) The first is that our culture understands meekness as weakness. (2) The second is that most of our culture does not believe that Jesus will return to the earth to rule the nations with an iron scepter. In other words, they do not recognize Jesus as the Sovereign Lord.

First we must say that meekness is not equal to weakness. In fact, one definition of meekness is strength under control, as when a wild stallion is trained to respond to human guidance and control. Such an animal loses none of his strength, energy, or power. It is only that the stallion's energy and strength now respond to his master's guidance. So it is with the meek person. Jesus does not say, "Blessed are the timid." Jesus is pronouncing God's blessing upon the person who has put their strength, energy, drive, and personality under His control.

The two greatest figures in the Scriptures show that this definition of meekness is the correct one. The book of Numbers calls Moses the meekest man on the earth. No one who knows anything about the life of Moses would say that he was a weak man. But he was surrendered to the will of God, and so God used him to lead the Hebrews from Egypt to the border of the Promised Land. Jesus also referred to himself as being meek and lowly in spirit. He certainly was not weak either. The apostle John tells us in his Gospel that Jesus chased the animals that were being sold in the temple out of the temple along with those who were buying and selling them for the daily sacrifices. This is not the action of a weak man.

Meekness is a character trait that must be expressed in our behavior. When we are meek, for example, we are able to deal gently with those whose faith we think is weaker than our own. I use the word, "think," because often our faith is not as strong as we would like to think it is. The point is that people don't need to live up to my standards in order for me to love them. Those who are meek are also able to "disagree agreeably" with others. Again, when we deal with people who like to quarrel with us, meekness expresses itself in love—in gentleness. Finally, meekness enables us to act with grace towards those who intentionally hurt us in some way. Instead of being overcome by evil, we can overcome



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evil with good. Only those who possess the spiritual character trait of meekness will be able to respond in these ways.

This beatitude also carries a specific blessing with it. The meek will inherit the earth both now and in the future. The meek have the greatest capacity to enjoy God's creation in the here and now. If I am controlled by myself or by anger or by greed and so on, I will not be fully able to appreciate God's creation as it already exists. But if my spirit is controlled by the Spirit of God, He will empower me to enjoy God's creation to the fullest here and now. We inherit the earth in the sense that we enjoy it more fully than the person who is not controlled by the Spirit.

But our inheritance of the earth will be most fully ours when God's eternal kingdom comes. The meek will receive their ultimate reward when God's eternal kingdom comes on earth. God surely wants to bless us here and now. Even more, however, he wants us to look forward to eternity. He wants our vision of everlasting life with Him to help us to focus and guide our actions here and now. The apostle Peter wrote, "...we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness." This inheritance is reserved for those who are meek because they have