**PURSUE (The Beatitudes) – Wk 2 – Mourn and Meek**

**One day Jesus walked up a hill on the northeast shore of Galilee, overlooking the sea of Galilee, sat down and He began to teach… (pic)**

**This became one of the most famous teachings in history.**

**Matthew 5:1** **And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. 2 Then He opened His mouth and taught them… (The most well-known are called the Beatitudes)**

**Some of His best known, but least understood teachings.**

**8-character traits that reflect the heart of God. To pursue them is to do the opposite of what our flesh desires.**

**To understand - Background check:**

* **1st century Judea - Their life was a world of chaos**
* **Occupied by tyrannical military Govt (Rome) 3 out of 4 a slave.**
* **Rome had absolute rule – no active democracy – no freedom**

**Diff. groups responded to this chaos in culture**

**Zealots – demanded power thru violence / Sadducees – got power thru compromise and politics / Pharisees - kept power thru religious control / Public - sought power thru racial hatred. Sounds like our world today.**

**In the middle of all of this – Jesus walks thru the crowds – thru the valleys of Judea and up a hill near the Sea of Galilee to share a kingdom perspective of this life.**

**(Luke 6:20-22) He said: 3** **“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. *(satisfied)* 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**

**Jesus was challenging them to a new way of thinking and life that was radically different that anything they had ever heard.**

**At the heart of the beatitudes is - How to live a Truly God Blessed life**

**They are called the Beatitudes - means “blessing” in Latin**

**They all have something in common – they all are painfully unpleasant. So - how are they a blessing?**

**When Jesus said *“blessed* are…” – he was not talking about having prosperity, provision, health, and happy days.**

**God’s blessing is deeper – it transcends our circumstances**

**Last week - “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**The impoverished in spirit - a life humbled, broke, and bankrupt – a life of total dependency – leads to true blessing and eternal life.**

**Some say - Jesus is just a crutch for the weak – no, Jesus is a stretcher – because none of us can walk without him.**

**This week two more - Matthew 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.**

**BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN**

**This one follows up on the foundation of a broken spirit.**

**Poor in Spirit – tells us there must be an emptying of our lives before there can be a filling. Poor in spirit = poverty spirit. While the first one is an emptying – the 2nd is a filling. (illus??)**

**I am broken (poor in spirit) Jesus in my salvation… but I’m still hurting and mourning – my heart is aching… you are blessed. How? Filled.**

**What is mourning? “to cry and wail” Usually used for one who is dead.**

**Jesus is giving a powerful word picture.**

* **Mourning over pain and suffering**

**Lost hope – lost health – pain and suffering – chronic pain**

* **Mourning over the loss of love**

**Mourn the pain of life –death – a break up**

* **Mourning over a lost hope**

**Death to a dream – of a planned future – home - investment**

* **Mourning over regret and sin**

**Regret over one’s sins – looking back, lost potential life.**

**Many look for comfort from sorrow in diff ways: alcohol, sex, drugs, technology, shopping, media… an attempt to escape reality.**

**But to a follower of Jesus mourning is a blessing. When we come face to face with our sin and inadequacies we find God’s grace**

**The blessing of comfort Jesus is referring to, is for Christians only**

**2 Corinthians 7:10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.**

**Mourning & sorrow without Jesus is just sad.**

**Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.**

**For who? Those are in relationship with God – called to salvation. All things only apply to those who are followers of Jesus.**

**For many sad events are just sad – where nothing turns out good.**

**Followers of Jesus know that their weeping and grieving is but for a time only. (Isa. 25:8; Rev. 21:4)**

**For a disciple of Jesus - mourning leads to the Cross – the cross brings comfort. The gospel of Jesus is the only source of true comfort.**

**For with salvation comes the gift of the HS – the comforter.**

**Only Jesus can carry your (sin, regret, pain, & sorrow) he suffered on the cross for our sake - cast your burdens on him, for he cares for you!**

**This Comfort for those who are his – in this life - Matthew 11:28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.**

**John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.**

**And for those who are his – in the life to come - Rev 21:** **4 ‘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.”**

**The result of the broken and comforted life – leads to the next one. There is an emptying, then filling, now a walking. Jesus says God is our comforter - then he shakes it up with this one.**

**BLESSED ARE THE MEEK**

**Remember – their life is filled with suffering and chaos. Zealots were attempting to gain power through violence, force, and protest - the Pharisees had tight control thru manipulative religion…**

**Then Jesus says - Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. (the land)**

**Jesus says - You want the land back? You want to inherit (blessing) the land? Be meek. Wha…? Are we supposed to do nothing? Be gentle? Sounds week! Be kind? This would have been absurd to them.**

**They understood the power of the sword- but they never considered the greater power of meekness.**

**Meekness is not -**

* **Meekness is not passive niceness – whatever you want…**
* **Meekness is not cowardice – I don’t want any trouble – stay out**
* **Meekness is not inaction – it will fix itself – do nothing**

**A great example of active meekness is MLK. He actively stood against injustice – without violence. His approach to the civil rights movement was attacked by people in his own community.**

* **Meekness is not weak**

**David, Joseph, Jeremiah – all were described as powerful and meek.**

**Number 12:3 Now the man Moses was very meek (humble, lowly), more than all people who were on the face of the earth.**

**Moses was both power, brave and strong – yet meek**

**Jesus described himself and others describe Jesus as meek**

**Revisit - Matt 11:28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, (meek) and you will find rest for your souls. (this is an echo of the first two beatitudes) 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (explain)**

**Matthew 21:5 “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, (meek) and mounted on a donkey… a beast of burden.’”**

**Paul – 2 Cor 10:1 – “I urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ…”**

**Phil 2:7-8 – Though Jesus was God – took the form of a meek servant…**

**Jesus is not weak – he holds all the power of God!**

**Jesus is God – commanding and dangerous – yet meek.**

**I am reminded of the Chronicles of Narnia: Aslan: “Is he safe?” – “not he is not safe… but he is good.”**

* **Meekness is strength under control - Who’s control? Not yours.**

**It denotes an inward calm and acceptance of God’s will.**

**A surrender of control – to a greater control. !!Submission!!**

**It’s root word means, equilibrium – an inner balance. Someone who does not blow up easily – but is meek, gentle, balanced.**

**The image is of a vessel large and powerful – lead by a captain in a storm – we are controlled and balanced by captain Jesus.**

**That is why - Gal 5:22-23, Col 3:12 – says meekness is the fruit of the spirit found in a true disciple of Jesus.**

**Often used in the ancients to describe a powerful wild horse – strong and dangerous, but who’s spirit is tamed by their owner. Still powerful, but now gentle, submissive, and tender to their owner. That is what God does. The meek relinquish control of their lives unto Christ. He tames us and takes control. Meekness here is the God-controlled life.**

**Therefore, we treat others in humility as one under the masters control.**

**The vulnerability of the meek is both beautiful and painful. It goes against all that we are by our sinful nature. It requires supernatural help – to surrender control to God and respond gently.**

**Jesus was actually quoting – Psalm 37:11 But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity.**

**A popular Psalm many of those listening would have known. The verses before it – they define meekness…**

**To Be Meekness**

**Psalm 37:** **1 Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; 2 for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away.**

**V 1-2 – the meek have an eternal perspective of life’s trials**

**The evil, angry, wicked, spiteful and envious – they will not last forever. The meek understand the brevity of life – temp.**

**3 Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.**

**V 3 – the meek trust God**

**Biblical meekness is rooted in the deep confidence that God is for you - not against you. This is why we can let go of control.**

**4 Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. (this is an echo of this beatitude)**

**V 4 – the meek seek to please God**

**How we usually see this verse – what it means. The meek seek to honor God and seek his delight – rather than their own rights and power. That’s opposite their perspective.**

**5 Commit your way to the Lord; (Commit = to “to roll”. We roll it over to God – my life is yours) trust in him and he will do this: 6 He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun.**

**V 5-6 – the meek commit their ways to the Lord**

**Meekness is an active submission to God’s will – Roll over that boulder. Let go of the reigns of control. A tamed stallion.**

**7 Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.**

**V7– the meek wait on God**

**A calm and peace as we wait for God’s timing. (peace that surpasses understanding – Phil 4:7)**

**The meek have a calm steadiness about their lives in the face of obstacles – because they know God is good and at work. No sweat.**

**As a result, the meek are teachable & have wisdom. (Ja 1:19-21, 3:13,17)**

**Psalm 37:8 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.** **10 A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found.**

**V8-9 – the meek are slow to anger**

**The meek do not live by violence to solve problems.**

**Matt 26:52 – “…all who live by the sword – die by the sword.”**

**The meek understand that Violence does not bring peace.**

**If we lived in a oppressive govt. (which we don’t) many might first think, stock piles guns and get ready to fight. If I said stand down – you might think – get out of my way! I dare you to take this! Do something!**

**This meekness went against their mindset… and our American mindset**

**I am thankful for those who sacrifice their lives to defend our freedoms and rights – we should. BUT - according to Jesus, ultimate victory will never be found at the end of barrel.**

**The meek understand that God is the vindicator. “Meekness is the power to absorb adversity and criticism without lashing back.” – Piper**

**This is then where we get to what Jesus said was the blessing of it – Psalm 37:11 But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity.**

**V8-9 – the meek will inherit blessings (barak – to pass down)**

**This does not mean we will own the earth (for all things belong to Christ, 1 Cor 3:21-23). This is a state of blessing in this life and the inheritance the blessings of kingdom in the afterlife.**

**That is the beauty of - Matthew 11:** **28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (mourning) 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, (surrender / meek) and you will find rest for your souls. (comfort) 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (inherit the blessing of this earth)**

**The great powerful almighty God of all creation - who is meek – is inviting you to come (especially those who are hurting) to give control over to the one who controls all things – to be comforted and inherit hope.**