

AM Matthew 5:1-12

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 21 July 2024

Preacher: Rev Jonathan Watson

[0 : 00] Please turn with me in the scriptures to Matthew chapter 5. In fact, let's read the verses immediately preceding where the Sermon on the Mount begins in Matthew 4, verses 23, and then we'll take it through to verse 12 of Matthew 5.

I think it's good to remind ourselves of the uniqueness of the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. The time in which he came, it was a special, unique time, never to be repeated.

Something marvelous was taking place, the fulfillment of God's covenant promises. And it's good for us to read these words that speak about the breaking in of the power of God into this world, in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's this prophet, priest, and king. The anointed one, the Messiah. That's what the word Messiah, Christ, means. The anointed one.

And we see him anointed with the Spirit's power in a way that none of the other Old Testament prophets were empowered.

[1 : 42] There was something unique about this person. And Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom.

And listen to this. And healing every disease and every affliction among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria.

And they brought him all the sick. Those afflicted with various diseases and pains. Those oppressed by demons.

Epileptics and paralytics. Epileptics and paralytics and paralytics and paralytics. And he healed them. And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and from Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain. And when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[3 : 15] Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the people of heaven. Blessed are the people of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. For so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

[4 : 31] Amen. Let us pray. O God, our Father, we give thanks to you that in your love you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, into this world.

That whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. We thank you for the light and liberty of your glorious gospel, made known in all the earth and precious to every generation of your people.

We praise you for your Holy Spirit's work in bringing us to the knowledge of the gospel. We thank you for all heavenly blessings that we enjoy as your people.

Election, sanctification, assurance, and the hope of glory. We give you thanks, O God, that you have provided for our physical needs as well as for our spiritual.

We have opened your hand, says the psalmist. You've supplied the needs of all your creatures. We praise you for the wonderful world that you have made.

[5 : 46] We thank you for this land in which you have placed us. We thank you for the material comforts which are our daily portion. We praise you for these temporal and physical mercies.

We thank you for the gift of human love, for fellowship with one another in the church of Jesus Christ. We bless you for the innocent pleasures that we enjoy.

And we trace every good and perfect gift as coming from you. Our heavenly Father, the Father of lights, says James, in whom there is no shadow caused by turning.

We thank you for opportunities for service. For the lessons that you teach us in times of adversity and hardship. For the comfort you bring us in times of sorrow.

Lord, for these things we glorify you. For all your bountiful provision. Accept, Heavenly Father, our thanksgiving through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[7 : 03] Lord, as we come before you at this point in our service, we would remember those who are in great need. We also pray for your church.

We pray that you would raise up more ministers of the gospel. Who love you and who love your word and who love your people. That they might pastor your flock.

And teach the word of God in all sincerity and faithfulness. Lord, we pray that your people may love and humbly serve you.

In their homes and amongst their neighbours. And at their work. And at their work. We pray that in all things we will rejoice to do your will.

We pray for our king and our country. And those in positions of power and authority over it. We pray that you, the king of kings. We pray for our hearts and minds.

[8 : 06] That they would fulfil the duties of their office. So that the Christian faith may be purely maintained.

That the morals of our nation may be reformed. That work would be respected and honoured. And that crime would be justly punished in accordance with the principles of your word.

Lord, we pray for the nations. We pray for the nations. And we commend to you all those who are suffering through afflictions such as war or terrorism. Or natural calamity.

Persecution. Ignorance. Or even enslavement. We ask that you would strengthen the hands of all those who seek by righteous means to help the afflicted.

And to those who are utterly destitute of all human assistance. We pray that you would give them the comfort of your presence.

[9 : 15] And Lord, we ask that you would uphold and strengthen all those who take the message of the gospel. The gospel of light.

The gospel of healing. Where the darkness is the deepest and the need is the greatest. Lord, remember before your throne of grace.

We pray for the members of this congregation placed in this town, in this corner of Scotland. We pray for our families and friends and neighbours and those who are visiting with us.

We pray that the fruit of your spirit. Love. Joy. Peace. Patience.

Kindness. Goodness. Faithfulness. Gentleness. And self-control. Might increase.

[10 : 20] And abound. In greater measure. Among us. And Lord, we remember before you the sick. And those who are suffering.

And those who are dying. And those who are mourning. We pray for widows and for orphans.

We remember before you the lonely and the poor and the outcast. We pray for the depressed. And those who are worried and anxious.

For those who are heartbroken. For those who are in despair. Especially such as known to ourselves. Lord, have mercy upon them all.

And give them patience. And faith. And consolation and hope. And remember with your spirit's help.

[11 : 21] Those who seek to minister to them. And to help them in whatever way they can. Lord, we pray for the propagation of the gospel.

We thank you that across the world. We have brothers and sisters in Christ. Who are seeking to take that gospel to the nations. To the tribes.

To the family groups. To all the different language groups. Of our world. And we pray that you would prosper their efforts.

And may the gospel go forth. In your spirit's power and might. Bringing about conversions. And the transformation of individuals.

In such great numbers. That nations themselves. Just as our own was in past days. Be transformed by the gospel's power.

[12:21] O Lord, since your spirit assures us. That you are our merciful. Father who so loves us. As your children. Through Jesus Christ. That you will not deny us anything.

That we ask for in his name. And according to your will. We offer these prayers to you. In the confidence.

That you will honor them. In your time. And for your glory. For it is that above all that we ask and pray for.

The glory of God. In Jesus Christ. In whose name we pray. Amen. Amen. So please turn with me in the scriptures to Matthew chapter 5.

And let us read together again. Verse 5. That we are going to think about this morning. This third beatitude. Of the Lord's Sermon on the Mount.

[13:24] Blessed are the meek. For they shall inherit the earth. The regulars.

If they have got good memory. Will know that we have been looking at the Beatitudes. In the Sermon on the Mount. This great sermon.

That Jesus Christ. The anointed king. Of God's kingdom. Has. Begun here.

In Matthew chapter 5. The Lord. Is doing something wonderful. In the Lord Jesus Christ. And the kingdom of God.

Long promised. Has now entered. Into. Our world. In the coming. Of God's king. And those who are brought.

[14:23] Into this kingdom. This kingdom of God. Are the citizens. Of this kingdom. And these citizens. All have. Similar. What we might call.

Family. Characteristics. Or character traits. Though from very different backgrounds. Though from different social standings. Though.

Enjoying different educational. Privileges. And so on. Though they differ. In many. Various ways. Yet.

They all share. These same. Features. These same. Marks. Of life. And character. What are they like. Before God.

We might ask. The answer. They are poor. In spirit. They mourn. And they are meek.

[15:18] Now. Previously. We focused. The whole of our attention. On what it means. To be. Poor in spirit. And then we looked at.

What it means. To mourn. And this morning. I want us to take up. This next beatitude. In verse five. Blessed are the meek. For they shall inherit the earth.

Poverty of spirit. And mourning over sin. Leads us into this third beatitude.

Blessed are the meek. For they shall inherit the earth. And I think there is a definite. Strong connection. Between these three.

Christian graces. Or characteristics. As we have seen. In previous. Studies. Being poor in spirit.

[16:14] Acknowledging one's own. Spiritual bankruptcy. Before God. Leads. Inevitably. To mourning. To grieving.

With sorrow. And shame. Over our sinfulness. And our sins. And this. In turn. Will lead. To the way. We view ourselves.

Both in relation to God. How we view ourselves. In relation to our. God. And how we. View ourselves. In relation. To.

Other people. Meekness. That. Is what. Will characterize us. Now the word.

Meekness. Is. A hard word. To get to the bottom of. And to clearly. Define. It's helpful. Perhaps. To say. What it is not. Meekness.

[17:10] Is not. Weakness. Meekness. Is not. A lack of backbone. Rather. Meekness. Is a humble. Strength.

That belongs. To a man. Who has learned. To submit. To difficulties. Difficult experiences. Difficult. People. Knowing.

Knowing. That. In everything. God. Is working. Together. For his good. The meek man. Is someone. Who has stood.

Before God's judgment. And he has. Willingly. Surrendered. All his. Supposed. Rights. He has learned.

Out of thankfulness. To God. For his grace. To bow humbly. Before the Lord. Lord. And to be gentle. And to be. Kind.

[18:04] With his fellow sinners. I think it will be helpful. To call to mind. The two. Outstanding. Examples. Of meekness. Which.

The scriptures. Present. To us. Because this will. Help us. To grasp. What meekness. Is. And to apply. The test. Of whether.

We are meek. Before God. And others. Remember. When we come to scripture. It's not simply. That we might learn. It is that we might be.

Transformed. That we might apply. What we know. And have learned. From scripture. To ourselves. Measuring ourselves. Against. The perfect standard.

That scripture sets. Before us. Seeing. Where we fall short. To acknowledge. Our poverty of spirit. To mourn. And grieve.

[18:58] Over our sins. Our shortcomings. And then. To know what it is. Before God.

Others. To be meek. To humbly submit. To the Lord. To put others. Before ourselves.

The first example. I want to draw your attention to. And these are the two outstanding examples. I've already drawn your attention. If you were. The children's talk.

To Abraham. But. I want to. Draw your attention to two. Perhaps even greater examples. Of meekness. That we find in scripture. And the first example. Is that of Moses.

Whom you remember. Was described. In numbers chapter 12. And verse 3. As. Very. Meek. More than all the people.

[19:53] Who were on the face of the earth. In other words. Moses. Was the meekest man. In all the world. In his day. But the truth is.

If you know something. About Moses's life story. Is that. This meekness. Was no part. Of Moses's natural disposition.

He wasn't born. That way. Rather. He was. Made. That way. By a long suffering. And patient. And gracious. God. Now why do I say that? Well again. I trust you're familiar. With Moses's life story. In his. Early years.

Moses. Seems. To have been a self-sufficient. Young man. And like many. Self-sufficient. Young men. Today. He was both. Impetuous.

[20:53] And self-willed. Remember what we're told. In that great speech. Of Stephen. In Acts chapter 7. Stephen says. He supposed.

That his brothers. Would understand. That God was giving them. Salvation. By his hand. He thought. He imagined.

That God was leading him. To be the one. Who would deliver. The children of Israel. From Egyptian. Slavery. And so. You remember.

When he killed. The Egyptian. Who was abusing. His fellow Israelite. He supposed. That. His brothers. Would understand. That what God.

Was giving them. Salvation. By his hand. That they would rally. Behind him. And that he would lead them. Out of Egypt. But that. Didn't happen.

[21:48] Did it? No it didn't. In fact. It took 40 years. 40. Years. In the loneliness. And isolation. Of the wilderness.

40 years. Of tending sheep. Rather than shepherding. Israel. Before Moses. Natural. Spirit. Was subdued. By God.

And he was prepared. For the call. He eventually received. From within the burning bush. In Exodus 3. Think of what those.

Years of testing. Must have been like. For an impetuous. Arrogant. Perhaps young man. Like Moses. He may have.

Despaired. That he would. Ever. Be useful. In God's service. 40 years. As a shepherd. In the lonely wilderness.

[22:45] Gave him. Plenty of time. To reflect. On his sin. To mourn over it. And to learn. Patience. And submission. To God's will.

And what's the lesson. Then we can learn. From. Moses' example. In the light of this. Third. Beatitude. Blessed. Are the meek. For they shall inherit the earth.

What is the lesson we can learn? Well surely. It is good for us. It is good for us to see. That Christian grace. All Christian graces. But this Christian grace. Of meekness. In particular. This third kingdom. Characteristic. Is so vital. To everything. God. Wants to do. With our lives. God. Wants. Us. His believing people. To be meek. [23 : 42] But this. Is not something. That we are by nature. We are anything. But meek.

And so. God may first have to break. Our pride. And destroy. Our sense of natural. Self-sufficiency. He has to humble us. Under his mighty hand. Before. He will use us. For his glory. And how does he do this? He does it by. Often sending trials. Which. Reveal the secret ambitions. We have hidden. Within our hearts. And which. Uncover. Our reliance. Upon ourselves. And then. As he patiently. Changes us. He develops. Within us. This. Meekness. Of character. And then. [24 : 44] He will use us. For his glory. And for blessing. The lives. Of other people. So what a great example.

Moses is. Of this principle. But I said. That scripture gives us. Two outstanding. Examples. Well. What's the second. Outstanding example. You've maybe already guessed it. It is of course. Our Lord. Jesus Christ. Remember what. Is said of. The Lord. In fact. What the Lord. Himself. Says of himself. In Matthew 11. Verse 29. He says. To those who are weary. And burdened. For I am. In our version. Gentle. And lowly. [25 : 38] In heart. That word. Gentle. Which is also found. In the fruit of the spirit. Can also be translated. And often. Is translated.

As. Meek. Or meekness. That. Gentleness. That meekness. He is meek. And lowly. Of heart. Now. I may be wrong. But I think I'm correct. And I say that meekly. That this. Gentleness. Or meekness. Of heart. Is the only quality. And this is amazing. Isn't it? It's the only quality. That our Lord. Jesus Christ. mentions. To draw attention. To himself. Isn't that amazing? [26 : 38] It is the only quality. That Jesus Christ. Draws. Other people's attention. To himself. Meekness.

Gentleness. Jesus. Wants you to know. That with all. With all his strength. And power. And what strength. And power. Did we read of. In the verses. Immediately preceding. The account. Of the Sermon on the Mount. Yet with all this. Divine. Strength. And power. He is gentle. He is meek. With others. He is indeed. In the words of Charles Wesley. Gentle. Jesus. Meek. And mild. The people are inclined. [27 : 43] To shy away. From. And even. To despise. This description. Of our Lord. Jesus Christ. In Charles Wesley's. Famous hymn. But we shouldn't shy away.

From. That description. And for two reasons. Because. First of all. These. Words. Are really. Part. God. God's. Own. Description. Of himself. So. If we. Despise. This. Description. We are really. Despising. Jesus. Himself. And secondly. Because. What Jesus. Is. Is. What. We. Are designed. To be. And if. We have been. Redeemed. Then. [28 : 39] There is no question. But we. Will. Be made. To be like. Our Lord. Jesus Christ. Because that is. God's. Predestinating. Purpose. For all his children. We have.

We have been. Predestined. To be conformed. To the image. Of God's son. That he. Might be the firstborn. Among many brothers. And I should add. That meekness. Is a quality. That is. Absolutely. Essential. For those. Who are called. To be. The ministers. Or servants. Of Christ. Whether elders. In a congregation. Or whether. Ministers. Of the gospel. Indeed. Whatever. The service. Is. That the Lord. Calls us. To. But do you remember. How Isaiah. Described the servant. Of the Lord. In Isaiah 42. Verses 2. And 3. He said. The servant of the Lord. Will not cry aloud.

[29 : 36] Or lift up his voice. In the street. And then these beautiful. Poetic words. A bruised reed. He will not break. And a.

Faintly. Burning wick. He will not quench. He is gentle. Because he is meek. In heart. And all the servants. Of the Lord. Are to share. In this same. Gentle. Quality. That characterized. The life. And the ministry. Of Jesus. As I am. Gentle. And lowly. In heart. It's interesting.

When you read through. Paul's. Letters. To the churches. To really read them. Slowly. And carefully. Because there is so much. Packed into them. And often.

[30 : 35] We can miss. Some of the. Little details. Which are nevertheless. So very telling. As far as Christian. Life and service.

Is concerned. And here is. Here is one such. Occasion. In 2 Corinthians. Chapter 10. When Paul was faced. With a congregation. That was.

Out of order. And one that. We might think. Deserved. A great. Display. Of apostolic. Strength. In order to put it right.

The apostle Paul. Instead. Appealed. To the Corinthians. By the meekness.

And gentleness. Of Christ. Isn't that amazing? It was by the meekness. And gentleness of Christ.

[31 : 29] That he sought to appeal. To these Christian people. Who were walking. As a church. Disorderly. Before the Lord. And for the same reason.

Paul underscored. In his teaching. To Timothy. Who was a young minister. Of the gospel. About Christ. Like leadership. In the churches. That the Lord's servant. He says.

Should pursue. Gentleness. 1 Timothy 6. And verse 11. The Lord's servant. Should pursue.

Gentleness. And the instruction. The servant. Should give. To the members of the church. Must be with. Gentleness. He must not be.

Quarrelsome. That's the opposite. That's. That's reminiscent. Isn't it. Of what we. Spoke to the children. Of. Of Abraham. And lots.

[32 : 26] Herdsmen. And shepherds. At strife. Striving with one another. But the Lord's servant. Shouldn't strive.

He shouldn't be quarrelsome. He should be gentle. In his approach. So what a beautiful picture. This paints. Christian ministers.

Indeed. All Christians. Are to resemble. The great shepherd. Of the sheep. The Lord Jesus Christ. Christ. His meekness.

His gentleness. His. Kindness. Is this. True.

Of us. I look at myself. When I. Measure myself. Against the yardstick. Of. The word of God. When I look into the mirror.

[33 : 27] Of. God's word. All I see. Is. Sinfulness. And. Ugliness. And. Failure.

Sinfulness. And. Perhaps. You're feeling the same. This morning. It's good to let the word of God. In the hands of the spirit of God.

Test us. And try us. And weigh us. In the balances. Because. Because. It's only.

As we are so sifted. It is only. As we see. Our sin. And. Failure. That we will.

Recognize. Fresh. And confess. Again. Before the Lord. Our poverty. Of spirit. And we will.

[34 : 21] Mourn. Before him. With sadness. And with grief. And with shame.

Our sinfulness. And our sin. And as we experience. In that position. The Lord's grace.

And tender dealings. With us. Afresh. In the gospel of Christ. That we will rise. From our knees. With a determination.

To treat others. With the same. Gentle grace. That we ourselves. Have received.

At the hands of God. Blessed. Are the poor in spirit. Blessed. Are those who mourn.

[35 : 19] Blessed. Are the meek. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. For they shall be comforted. For they. Shall inherit.

The earth. May God bless his word. To us this morning. Let us pray. O God. Our heavenly father. Where would we be.

Without the. Meekness. Gentleness. Lowliness of heart. Of your son. Our savior. The Lord Jesus Christ.

And when we think of his words. To his disciples. If you have seen me. You have seen the father. When we realize that.

No one has seen you. At any time. But the only begotten. Who is in the bosom. Of the father. He. Has. Declared him. Oh.

[36 : 22] What joy. It is for us. To realize. That what we see. In Jesus. Is the revelation. Of the very heart. Of God himself. What a gracious.

Merciful. Compassionate. God. You are. We can say. With the prophet. It is of the Lord's. Mercies. That we are not consumed. Because his. Compassions. Fail not. They are new. Every morning. Great.

Is your. Faithfulness. And so. We come. With confidence. Yet. In humility. Before you. Confessing. Our sins. Our sins. Of pride. Our sins. Of arrogance. Our sins. Of. Self. Sufficiency.

[37 : 18] Of a reliance. Upon ourselves. And we pray. Lord. Empty us. Of ourselves. And fill us. With.

Your spirit. That we might have. The mind. Of Christ. And that the word. Of Christ. May dwell. Richly. In our hearts.

Producing. That fruit. That will make us. More and more. Look like. And behave like. And think like. The Lord Jesus Christ.

Himself. And we ask. These things. Because we want. To glorify you. In our bodies. And in our spirits. Which you have redeemed.

At such great cost. To yourself. Amen. Amen.