

Meek Inherit

#0127

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—August 8, 1975

The text is Matthew 5:5. Jesus is on the mountainside. The multitude is gathered about Him. The disciples press in close. With eager interest, hundreds of eyes are fixed on the Savior. He is announcing His kingdom. In the third verse He begins:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” Matthew 5:3.

Then He adds:

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted” Matthew 5:4.

And then to our text of the evening:

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” Matthew 5:5.

We are told that in the Bible times, meekness was not looked upon as something especially to be desired. The words concerning Moses that he was the meekest of men living at that time would not have been considered a compliment. But it made him great in the sight of the Lord. And so Jesus says, to His disciples, and to all who will listen, “Blessed,” happy, “are the meek,” the humble, the lowly.

You remember that a bit later in Matthew the 11th chapter, verses 28–30, He invites all the weary laden to come to Him, and learn of Him, and He says, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” “I am meek and lowly in heart.” Jesus practiced what He preached. He was what He taught. He was meek and lowly of heart. And to be meek does not mean to be weak. A weak man can be meek, but a strong man can be meek. And may I tell you, friends, it takes a special strength to be meek under some circumstances.

I was reading about an old Scotch religion professor in a seminary in Great Britain. He was approached one day by a rather timid theological student, who in a hesitant way, began to labor with the old professor about his temper. The old man looked at him, and he said, “Young man, I’ll have you know I control more temper in an hour than you do in your whole lifetime.” He had a lot to control, you see. Meekness, I repeat, and weakness are not synonymous.

Jesus was not a weakling. He was strong in body, strong in spirit, and when His enemies sought to goad Him, to irritate Him, He calmly relied on His Father, and in the strength of Heaven, He revealed love and kindness.

“When He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not” 1 Peter 2:23.

This was meekness at its best. And so He says:

“I am meek and lowly in heart” Matthew 11:29.

And He says, “If you will come and learn of Me, you will find rest unto your souls.”

In *Desire of Ages*, page 88, it says of Christ, and this refers to His youth, but it characterized His entire life:

“He did not strive for worldly greatness, and in even the lowliest position He was content” *Desire of Ages*, page 88.

Oh, what a character! How different from the restless, ambitious spirit that cannot be content unless it rules, has its own way. This was the spirit that took possession of Lucifer as he indulged those feelings of pride that turned him into the adversary. Looking at Christ, he thought, “Why is Christ preferred above Lucifer? Why can’t I have all the honor, all the position that He has?” And he diffused those doubts among the angels and they plunged Heaven into war.

But Christ showed the opposite spirit. While Lucifer sought to exalt himself, Christ humbled himself and became obedient unto death.

And speaking of this, in Philippians the second chapter, the apostle says:

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus”
Philippians 2:5.

That humble mind, that meek mind. This is the secret of happiness. The heart that cannot be content in the lowly position will never be fully and truly satisfied.

“Ah,” somebody says, “sure, I’d be satisfied if I could just get such and such.”

Alexander the Great conquered the world and then sighed for other worlds to conquer. He died in a drunken debauch. No, friends, there is nothing in the ambitious, restless heart that can find happiness by seeming to satisfy its own longings. God has made us to be like Him, and He’s not like that. He is meek and lowly of heart. And He wants you and me to learn this lesson.

Interestingly enough, most Christians would render at least lip-service to all I’m saying. The problem is when it gets into the practical experience. The disciples of Christ, men chosen by our Lord Himself, were willing to leave their ordinary positions of employment or work. They were willing to leave whatever wealth they had, whatever means of livelihood, they were willing to go about with Jesus in poverty, and even hardship. But this test, they flunked again and again.

Isn't it interesting, friends, that if a person is proud, envious, ambitious, this manifests itself no matter how small the circle, and no matter how poor the surroundings? The scribes and Pharisees looked down at that little band of itinerant preachers, but each one of the 12 wanted to be what among the others? First. Hardly meek. No. Ambitious, proud, wanting to be first. And so, Christ had to keep giving this lesson over and over again.

And in our opening text, He says to all who will listen:

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth”
Matthew 5:5.

Notice He does not say, “They shall conquer the earth. They will fight for the earth and finally get it.” They shall what? Inherit the earth. How do you get an inheritance? It comes to you as a gift. Right? And when you and I get this earth, it will come to us as a gift, bought by our Lord and given to us to share with Him through eternal ages. Christ went the road that He asks us to go. He humbled Himself and went to the very bottom.

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him
a name which is above every name: That at the name of
Jesus every knee should bow” Philippians 2:9–10.

Yes, Christ went from the highest place to the lowest. And as the result, He will finally be exalted in that closing coronation service which marks the end of the great controversy. He'll be crowned as King of kings and Lord of lords and reign through eternity with everybody voting for Him (it). Nobody will want to take His place.

Oh friends, if you and I will be as submissive to God as He has exhibited, if we will surrender our lives to His service as He has shown us the example, we too will be exalted one day *far* beyond our highest expectations. But that's not the reason for being meek. If we think that being given honor, position, is a reward for being meek, we'll find that we have to work too long before payday, and we'll get tired and quit.

This is what many a man has done. Many a person in the church has said, “Well, I'll tell you. I've served my apprenticeship long enough, and I see people that haven't been in the church near as long as I have, and they're already this and this and this and this. And I don't like it.” Do you know what I mean?

Here's something very interesting in the book *Education*:

“Talent is too much idolized, and station too much coveted”
Education, page 117.

What does station here mean? Position.

“Talent is too much idolized, and station too much coveted.
There are too many who will do nothing unless they are

recognized as leaders; too many who must receive praise, or they have no interest to labor. What we need to learn is faithfulness in making the utmost use of the powers and opportunities we have, and contentment in the lot to which Heaven assigns us" *Ibid.*

"...and contentment in the lot to which Heaven assigns us"
Ibid.

I noticed that in some campgrounds, you go and pick out your own place. In others, you apply to the director, and he assigns you a certain location. In Heaven's *great* plan, there is a lot with your name on it. And if you will come to the great Director, He will assign you your position.

Somebody says, "Well, I think I know what it is, but apparently other people haven't found it out yet."

That could be. Moses had that problem. Turn to the seventh chapter of Acts, and you'll see what I mean. Here's this man that eventually learned the lesson that we're studying tonight and was the meekest man on the earth. But he wasn't meek when he was 40 years old, far from it.

"And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not" Acts 7:22–25.

Now really, getting down to facts, had Moses been chosen of God to deliver Israel? Was he born for that purpose? That's right. And God had never lost sight of that those 40 years. And Moses had been instructed that this was his mission when he was a boy. At his mother's knee, he learned of this assignment of providence. And through all those years as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, through all those decades of training and experience in the schools, the universities, the military training program of Egypt, through all those experiences, he never fully lost sight of that goal. And at the age of 40, he said, "Lord, I am settled. I am going to do what you made me for. I am going to carry on the work for which I was born." And so he set out to do it, but it wasn't a meek Moses that did it. No.

He began to order and dictate and enforce his decrees with the sword. Just the opposite of meekness. Then he got discouraged and ran away. You see, as the prophet to the remnant has told us, there is in human nature a tendency to go to extremes and from one extreme to another exactly opposite. One day Moses was so proud, and forward, and aggressive, and pushy that he was ready to kill men to carry out his program. But the next day he was fleeing away. He'd met a failure. But through it all, God never forgot him.

My point is, we've just read here, Moses thought, "he supposed that his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not." And so as I said, you may *feel* that God has chosen you for a certain position, maybe He has, maybe He hasn't. But in any case, did God wait for a while for Moses to mature and develop so that he could carry out his assignment? To state it in another way, was it in the providence of God that his brethren *didn't* accept him when he was 40 years of age?

Suppose they had accepted him? They would have rallied to his standard, and there would have been a war in Egypt between Pharaoh on the throne and Moses with Israel. And that wasn't God's way of handling the exodus.

So Moses had to learn what? Meekness. Do you know how long it took him to learn it? Forty years. He learned it out herding sheep. I've tried to imagine Moses out there with the sheep, when he finally quit running from Pharaoh and the Egyptians, found a home out there with Jethro. Jethro says, "Well Moses, if you'd like a job, you can herd sheep."

Here is the great five star general from Egypt. Now he's herding sheep. Can you imagine him trying to get those sheep to respond to military directives? He had to learn a different method. My dear brethren, you and I must learn a different method if we're to have a part in the exodus movement that takes us from the Egypt of this world to the heavenly Canaan we've got to learn meekness. And we don't learn meekness by being favored and pampered and catered to, and given positions to keep us from being sensitive. We don't get it that way, folks. Do we?

Oh, I pray that God may speak to our hearts, friends. If there's anybody that's fully and entirely meek tonight, pray for those that aren't, and there'll be plenty on your prayer list. But oh, many of us need to pray for ourselves, friends, that God may teach us this fundamental lesson of meekness, of just being meek and lowly in heart and waiting on God to put us in positions of responsibility if that's where he wants us.

I'll tell you this, friends, if God doesn't want me in a position of responsibility, I'm just plain crazy to want to put myself there. Isn't it true? And listen, if God wants me in a position of responsibility and with all *His* power and wisdom, *He* can't get me there because of conditions in the world, or the church, or the family, or community; if *He* can't get me there, what a foolish thing it would be for me to try *my* puny arm? Wouldn't it?

"He did not strive for worldly greatness, and in even the lowliest position He was content" *Desire of Ages*, page 88.

And Moses finally learned this lesson back there in the hills and mountains of Midian, out with the sheep. In fact, he learned it so well that God had to persuade him to become the leader of Israel when he was 80 years old. You remember that, don't you? But he finally accepted it. And then for another 40 years, he went the entire time under the most strenuous trials, in the most difficult circumstances, and only once did he fail to exhibit meekness. And for that, he lost the opportunity of leading Israel into the Promised Land.

But he repented, he was forgiven, but he had to die. Oh, could it be friend, that there's some dear brother or sister here tonight that God has marked for translation, that unless you learn this lesson, and learn it soon, you'll make some failure that even if you're saved, will mean you'll have to go the death route and miss that glorious experience of translation? Blessed are the meek. Let's learn it. What do you say?

In the book, *Our High Calling*, is this gem:

"Lowliness and meekness of mind, which ever characterized the life of the divine Son of God, possessed by His true followers, bring contentment, peace, and happiness, that elevate them above the slavery of artificial life" *Our High Calling*, page 98.

Talk about position, here is the real position—living above the slavery of artificial life. But what is it that does that? Lowliness and meekness of mind.

A friend of mine was telling me about something that he observed personally. It was an academic procession at a graduation ceremony. And one of the faculty, God pity him, was all irritated and fussed up because he hadn't been given the proper place in the procession that his rank deserved. Yes. There he was all in the gown and the regalia, and he belonged up there, and here he was here. There were a lot of people behind him, but there were some in front of him that shouldn't have been there. So he thought. So he wasn't very happy that evening.

"Lowliness and meekness of mind, which ever characterized the life of the divine Son of God, possessed by His true followers, bring contentment, peace, and happiness, that elevate them above the slavery of artificial life" *Ibid.*

Thank God, friends. We don't have to have title, or position, or recognition to be happy. No. We can be happy without any of it. Just happy with Jesus.

One of the most beautiful examples of this grace of meekness that's brought to us in the Bible is the life and experience of John the Baptist. In Luke the 1st chapter and the 15th verse, we read of his birth announcement. Here in this world, we usually have birth announcements after children are born, but the mightiest angel in Heaven came all the way from the throne to earth to make the birth announcement of *this* child before he was even conceived.

Read it there in Luke. This is the angel talking with a direct message from Heaven:

"He shall be great in the sight of the Lord" Luke 1:15.

In fact, Christ Himself during His earthly ministry testified more than once to John's greatness. He told a vast multitude that of all the people that had been born in this world, there had never arisen a greater than John the Baptist. But now let me

invite you to turn to John the third chapter, and we will see the greatest thing about this great man.

You remember that he was the forerunner of the Messiah. Down there by the Jordan River, he preached repentance and told that Christ was coming. And when He came, he baptized Him, and pointed the people to Him. And then the people began to come more to Jesus, and as Jesus was preaching in various places, they'd run to hear Jesus preach, and what did that do to John's crowd? Well, it cut it down. And some of his disciples came and talked to him about it.

The 26th verse. They said, "John, what about this? You used to have big crowds. And then this man came along and you pointed the people to Him, now they're all running to Him." Now let's hear John's answer. And here is the mark of true greatness in the sight of Heaven:

"John answered and said, a man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven" John 3:27.

Do you believe that? Well then, if you are complaining because you don't get enough notice, enough position, enough recognition, enough influence, who are you really complaining about? Hard to avoid the conclusion, isn't it?

"A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease" John 3:27–30.

Isn't that beautiful, friends? He likens himself to the friend of the bridegroom that's had a part in bringing the parties together. And he stands by and witnesses the joy of those whose union he has helped to effect. "'He that hath the bride is the bridegroom.' I am not the bridegroom," he says, "Jesus is the bridegroom. And it makes me happy to see people coming to him instead of me."

And then those matchless words of the 30th verse. Seven words, and here is the completeness, the perfection of meekness:

"He must increase, but I must decrease" John 3:30.

Will you repeat that with John the Baptist?

"He must increase, but I must decrease" John 3:30.

Commenting on this, *Desire of Ages* says:

"Happy are they who are willing for self to be humbled, saying with John the Baptist, 'He must increase, but I must decrease'" *Desire of Ages*, page 182.

Oh, let's be willing to get less so that He can be more. What do you say? You know, the only way a candle shines is to get shorter all the while. When it quits burning, it quits shining. A sacrifice doesn't increase, it decreases and is consumed. I repeat, friends: one of the most subtle temptations that afflicts the church today, and the work of God in *all* phases of, is this idea, that if you've renounced the world and gotten into God's work, somewhere along the line you ought to get some recognition and position. Somewhere along the line you ought to get an opportunity to tell other people what to do.

Well you say, "Shouldn't a person be ambitious?"

Ambitious to be like John the Baptist, ambitious to be like Jesus. Let me read you this from the book *Old Gospel Workers*:

"Many suffer grief, pain, and disappointment, because they are unwilling to fill the humble place which God's providence assigns them, where they will remain unnoticed and unknown" *Gospel Workers*, 1892 edition, page 459.

The word that I want you to notice is "remain."

Shall I read it again?

"But many suffer grief, pain, and disappointment, because they are unwilling to fill the humble place which God's providence assigns them, where they will remain unnoticed and unknown" *Ibid*.

"Oh," somebody says, "I don't think God wants me just doing what anybody can do." Well, you're not anybody then, are you? You're somebody.

Are you saying that God's plan for everybody is to get a higher position this year then he had last year, and then a higher position the next year? If a man is a deacon in the church for so many years, is he supposed to be "promoted" to elder? And where can he go after that? This whole idea, friends, of promotion, and of measuring our success by the position we have is just opposite to the spirit of Heaven. And we've got to be cleansed from it entirely if we have a part in the Loud Cry.

Moses learned it, as we've seen, feeding sheep. Whatever experience it takes for me to learn it, I want to learn it. What do you say? God help us to do it.

Early Writings, page 112. Helen and I were reading this for worship, and it struck me as such an interesting way of putting it. Speaking of looking at the suffering of Jesus for us:

"If we dwell on these things, dear self, with its dignity, will be humbled, and its place will be occupied by a childlike simplicity

which will bear reproof from others and will not be easily provoked" *Early Writings*, page 112.

Can you stand reproof? Or does it depend on who does it and how they do it?

"If we dwell on these things..." *Ibid.*

That is, the suffering of Jesus.

"...dear self, with its dignity, will be humbled, and its place will be occupied by a childlike simplicity which will bear reproof from others and will not be easily provoked" *Ibid.*

There's more than one person here tonight that could learn so much faster if they were willing to be counseled, willing to be corrected, willing to be reproofed. But dear ones, until we learn meekness, it's hard to learn some of the other things, for it is written:

"The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way" Psalm 25:9.

So let us cultivate this humble, childlike attitude, what do you say?

"Well," somebody says, "but Brother Frazee, I hear all this, and I know it, and I believe it, but my problem is I am not meek."

Well, let me encourage you. You've taken at least the first step, you've recognized your need. That's the first step. And how do we learn meekness? Jesus says, "Come and learn of Me." It is by beholding that we become changed. 2 Corinthians 3:18.

John and James were naturally combative. They hungered for the highest place. They got into quarrels with their fellow ministers as to who was going to have the best position. But friends, thank God, they learned meekness by looking at Jesus, living with Him, beholding Him, talking to Him, and finally watching Him die upon the cross after the agony in Gethsemane. They learned meekness. You and I can learn it. What do you say?

Let's set ourselves to this goal. But when we pray for meekness, let us remember that one of God's ways of answering us is to put us in positions where we need to exercise meekness. If I prayed for muscle and then never got a chance to use my muscles, my prayers would never be answered, would they?

And so when we pray for meekness, when we begin to value it as a desirable grace and gift, then in answer to prayer, God will allow us to be put into positions where meekness is essential. And as we pray to God, then in those seasons of trial, or disappointment, or misunderstanding, He will help us to put our will on the side of showing that meekness and lowliness of heart which characterized the Master.

And as we do this, expression deepens *impression*. Every exercise of the will on the side of God, when inspired by the Holy Spirit, strengthens that characteristic. And thus at last we shall be among those that join with the Lamb on Mt. Zion, having His name written in their foreheads. I want to be among the number. Don't you?

[Testimony service]

You know the good news is, and I know you know it, as long as we *choose* to be like Him, He counts us that way already. Isn't that nice? We're accepted just as if we had not sinned. Can't get anything better than that, can you? And remember, victorious Christian living, on the subject we've been studying tonight, does not mean that we always *feel* meek. It means that we *choose* that the meekness of Jesus shall be revealed in what we say and how we say it regardless of how we feel in our natural dispositions. Never think that it's a defeat merely because certain feelings come into the mind. *Temptation* is not sin. It's *yielding* to temptation that's sin.

Is there somebody here tonight that has never given your life fully to Jesus, but as you see His love and hear His invitation, you'll accept it, you'll give your heart to Him? Will you stand?

Is there somebody here tonight that once gave your heart to Jesus, but you took it back? Once put your hand in His, but you withdrew it. Tonight, you're going to give your heart, over again, to Jesus. Will you stand?

Oh, how glad He is for each one that says, "Yes" to Him.

Is there somebody here tonight that says, "Brother Frazee, I know that this message tonight was for me"? "I need this grace of meekness. And tonight, I'm choosing that Jesus shall me make me meek and lowly of heart." Somebody like that, you stand.

[Audience joins Elder Frazee in singing, "I Surrender All."]

[Prayer given by Elder Boykin]

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