

## Counter Culture

### “Gentleness and Pursuing Righteousness” - Matthew 5:5-6

Matthew 5:1-6 - “When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying, ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.’”

#### I. Blessed are the gentle. Vs. 5

##### A. What is gentleness?

To understand what gentleness is in this context, first, let’s look at the progression that is taking place in Jesus’ teaching.

Jesus is teaching that God’s person is first poor in spirit. That is, they live in a state of dependency on God. They do not think they are good and deserving of heaven. They recognize their sin and need for God’s grace and mercy.

Because of this, they mourn over their own sin and also over the sins of society.

In this context, gentleness or meekness is an honest view of one’s self and expressing it in attitude and conduct with others.

Jesus, who did not need to be gentle, was the perfect example of gentleness for us.

Philippians 2:5-8 - “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Jesus had **power under control**, and that is the literal definition of gentleness.

##### B. The blessing is that those who are gentle will inherit the earth.

1. They enjoy it more fully in this life. They know how to live and be content. They have an inner peace. They don’t need for things to always go their way to be at peace. When personal gain is allusive, they still have a sense of contentment.

2. The gentle will also possess the new heaven and new earth.

2 Peter 3:13 - “But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.”

#### II. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Vs. 6

A. The highest ambition of God’s person should be His kingdom and his righteousness. (Matthew 6:33).

We can understand this three ways.

##### a) legal - justification

Those who place their faith in Jesus are “declared” righteous by God because the sacrifice of Jesus is applied to their lives. They are declared justified, right with God. We should hunger for that right relationship and understand it is only possible by faith in Jesus’ work on the cross.

##### b) moral - sanctification

Those in Christ are called to strive to “act like who we are declared to be.” We are children of God. We are to act like it. We are to cooperate with the Holy Spirit within us to become more and more like Jesus in our character. We are to hunger and thirst for this righteousness of God to be formed in our own lives.

##### c) social - a just and right society

Those in Christ are to desire the world to be as God planned. Remember the Lord’s prayer - the model prayer? Jesus taught us to pray in Matthew 6:9-13, and part of that was “Thy kingdom come, they will be done ON EARTH as it is in heaven.” (vs 10)

##### B. The blessing is that they will be satisfied.

In Christ, our hunger and thirst for righteousness is satisfied first as we are freely forgiven and restored into a right relationship with God. We are promised to be with him in a perfect relationship forever in heaven.

In Christ, we are not only freed from the guilt of our sin and the penalty of sin. We are also freed from the power of sin over our lives. The Holy Spirit dwells within us. As we yield to the Spirit’s prompting in our lives, we become more and more like Jesus in our character.

In Christ, we can see some victories as we fight for justice and righteousness in our world. Those victories may seem small, and they may bring very limited satisfaction now, but one day, we are promised that in heaven, there will be no more injustice, no more sin, no more tears, no more pain. We will be satisfied.