

## Blessed are the Meek

### Acts 17:5-7

But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd. <sup>6</sup> And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, "**These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also,**" <sup>7</sup> and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus."

- What a charge to be "the men who have turned the world upside down".
- What do they mean by this?

### Matthew 5:5

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

- Paul and Silas were charged with "turning the world upside" because they were simply implementing the radical thing that Jesus said of his disciples on the mount.
- This makes no sense (just like the previous beatitudes) to the non-Christian hearer.
- The crowds leaning in to listen to Jesus teach his disciples were mostly Jews, maybe with a few Greeks, who were under Roman rule.
- Think about this... they live in a reality of land ownership... and it has nothing to do with being meek... it has everything to do with domination, conquest, fear and power!
- They were living in land that used to be theirs, that now belonged to Rome because Rome's power was absolute.
- And Jesus comes along and says that the meek shall inherit the earth – that goes against their entire reality!
- It doesn't make any more sense in our culture today than it did 2,000 years ago.
- Frederich Nietzsche once referred to this verse and said, "I regard this as the most fatal and seductive lies that ever existed." And Nietzsche is not alone in his negative opinion of this concept.
- In today's world the word "meek" is a slur. If you call a man meek, he'd feel insulted.

### BIG IDEA:

Christ came into the world to turn it right side up.

- When Paul and Silas are charged as the men "who have turned the world upside down" they are being accused by men who do not see the world the way it really works.
- The world's idea of conquest and possession has to do with power, self assertion and ambition.
- Take what you want, the strong survive and thrive... it is out of this insidious lie that theories of evolution and natural selection were birthed...
- The world is upside down and people who see that as the right way up are blinded. They think life is about success and possession and getting what you want... Christians see the world differently... the right way up.

- Followers of Christ recognize “greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world”. I am not worth defending, CHRIST is worth defending.
- The need to defend myself, the need to retaliate when I’m wrong, the need to prove myself when I’m corrected, these things melt away and I’m left with a gentleness, a meekness that humbly submits to the will of God and humbly endures difficulty as discipline.

We need to understand this: What does it mean to be meek?

### 1. Meekness is NOT weakness.

- I was a big superhero and comic book fan growing up and one of my favourite heroes was SUPERMAN.
- In DC lore Superman is the most powerful being on earth, and yet he disguises himself as Clark Kent, who is described as a meek, mild-mannered reporter.
- See Clark Kent can be meek, he can even APPEAR weak to others and not have to rise to defend himself because he knows under that goofy hat and thick glasses is the man of steel.
- First and foremost meekness is an attitude towards God, namely one of submission... it implies that we know our place, we know who we are, and as Christians knowing who we are gives us great confidence... not literally because of what we are, but as Sons of the Almighty God we have confidence in who Christ is in us.
- Paul says, in **Romans 8:31**, <sup>31</sup> “If God is for us, who can be against us?”
- This is not weakness... it’s meekness.

### 2. Meekness is ‘poorness of spirit’ manifested towards others.

#### **Romans 12:19-21**

*Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” <sup>20</sup> To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” <sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

#### **Proverbs 25:28**

*“Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit.”*

- Our attitude towards God manifests itself in how we relate to others.
- A meek person is someone who does NOT feel the need to rise up to their own defense.
- Romans 12:9 tells us not to take revenge, but to leave room for God’s wrath... meek people are those who allow God to vindicate them, or humble them...
- Proverbs 25:28 refers to the virtue of the meekness of self-control and says, *“Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit.”* In

other words, without meekness, you've got power but no control over it. Un-meek people are like an un-walled, vulnerable city.

WHAT TO DO:

1. Become a follower of Christ.
2. Begin to live like a citizen of the kingdom of God.