

Last week we discussed Wolterstorff and “those who mourn”. We should ache for those who suffer, for injustice, for the poor, for the grieving, and for a fallen world. Do you have these feelings for those around you?

We also discussed Thakur and his revelation that we have hope in the face of death that there is a better coming world. And we discussed Mathewes-Green and how we can only see a portion of our sinful nature. Have you thought of these this week?

Matthew 5:5 – Jesus said: **“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth”**. “Blessed” here refers to the ultimate well-being and distinctive spiritual joy of those who share in the salvation of the kingdom of God.

Meek - The Greek word in the Bible for “meek” is *praus* (or *praos*), a term that means strength under control, not weakness or timidity. A *praus* individual possesses humility, gentleness, and a willingness to yield their strength to a higher power, similar to how a powerful warhorse was trained to be obedient under its rider. How does this meaning compare to your interpretation of meek?

John Chrysostom (347-407) Archbishop of Constantinople, Turkey, church father, and Catholic saint. “When therefore your tongue is as Christ’s tongue, and your mouth has become the mouth of the Father, and you are a temple of the Holy Spirit, then what kind of honor could be equal to this?” What is Chrysostom saying here?

“No longer then will the devil be able so much as to look you in the face, when you have become such a one as this.”

What does speaking as Christ, your words being as the Father, and your heart filled with the Spirit do for you?

He then goes on to say that Jesus rejected the devil not by force but He “entrapped him by these sayings, he took him by gentleness, he turned him to flight by meekness.” How did Jesus stand up to Satan? How can you stand up to evil?

Elisabeth Elliot (1926 – 2015) was a Christian missionary, author, and speaker. Her first husband, Jim Elliot, was killed in 1956 while attempting to make missionary contact with the Auca people of eastern Ecuador. She later spent two years as a missionary to the tribe members who killed her husband. After living in South America for many years, she returned to the United States, wrote over twenty books, and became widely known as an author and a speaker. Elliot toured the country well into her seventies, sharing her knowledge and talking about her experience.

“The world cannot fathom strength proceeding from weakness, gain proceeding from loss, or power from meekness.”

How does the world see strength, gain, and power? How does the world see the teachings of Jesus?

1. God defends the meek.

Numbers 12:3 – “Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.”

The Hebrew word for “humble” in Numbers 12:3 is *anav* (אַנָּב), a term that can also mean meek, lowly, or poor, and which comes from a root meaning “to be bowed down” or “to be depressed”. This signifies a person who is gentle, modest, and has a humble, pious mind, rather than being weak.

In this scripture, Miriam and Aaron oppose Moses and God doesn’t like it. He inflicts Miriam with leprocy and she must go into the wilderness for 7 days before she can be healed and return. The Israelites wait for her before they continue their journey.

What does this tell us about God and his relationship with those who are meek? Have you experienced this?

2. God guides/teaches the meek.

Psalms 25:9 – “He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.” Here “*anav*” refers to someone who is spiritually humble and dependent on God, often as a result of afflictions, and who chooses to rely on God’s guidance and teachings.

Have you experienced instances where you know God was guiding/teaching you?

3. The meek rejoice in God.

Isaiah 29:19 – “Once more the humble will rejoice in the Lord; the needy will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.” As Christians who are meek and rely on God, we are happy that we worship the true God, our loving Father in Heaven. Do you ever feel happy about God?

4. We clothe ourselves in meekness.

Col. 3:12 – “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.” What is God asking us to do as meek followers of His word? How do we do it?

Richard Rohr (1943-) is an American Franciscan priest and writer on spirituality based in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was ordained to the priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church in 1970, founded the New Jerusalem Community in Cincinnati in 1971, and the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque in 1987. In 2011, PBS called him “one of the most popular spirituality authors and speakers in the world”. Rohr’s notable works include *The Universal Christ*, *Falling Upward*, and *Everything Belongs*. His spirituality is rooted in Christian mysticism and the perennial tradition.

Rohr discusses the phrase **“for they will inherit the earth”**.

“People close to the earth know that only God “owns” the earth, and that we’re all stewards, pilgrims, and strangers with a duty and privilege of caring for it. Who will “own” our plot of land fifty years from now? Ownership is clearly not an objective or divine right, but only a legal one.” What is Rohr saying here?

Teresa of Avila (1515 – 1582), also called **Saint Teresa of Jesus**, was a Carmelite nun and prominent Spanish mystic and religious reformer. “Our treasure must come from elsewhere and we never know when God will leave us in this prison of our misery without giving us any. If others, thinking we are good, bestow favors and honors upon us, both they and we shall look foolish when, as I say, it becomes clear that our virtues are only lent us. The truth is that, if we serve the Lord with humility, he will sooner or later succor us in our needs. But, if we are not strong in this virtue, the Lord will leave us to ourselves, as they say, at every step. This is a great favor on his part, for it helps us to realize fully that we have nothing which has not been given us.” What is Teresa telling us?