

**Sun., Jan. 24:**

Memory Verse: “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” -Matthew 5:5

Message: **Momentum (The Beatitudes) #4: Meek** -Pastor David

Sermon Scripture: Ephesians 5:18-22

Reading of Scripture: James 3:13-18

Blurb: Beatitude #3: Meekness. It’s seen as weakness by our culture. Yet Jesus calls it our strength. This Sunday we will fill up on meekness, as we embrace that its surrender and submission requires a strength and power beyond ourselves. Yet we are blessed, for we have the Holy Spirit to grow this godly meekness deep in our hearts, and give us a rich inheritance.

**WELCOME** -Pastor David

**MEMORY VERSE** -Pastor David

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” -Matthew 5:5

**WORSHIP MUSIC SET** -Sanctify

*Blessed to Be a Blessing*

*More Like Jesus*

Worship prayer -Pastor Andrew

**SCRIPTURE READING:** James 3:13-18 (CEB) -Reader: Bethany Bonsell

Meekness is a godly lifestyle. James, the brother of Jesus, gives a description of what living in meekness looks like. James 3:13-18,

“13 Are any of you wise and understanding? Show that your actions are good with a meek lifestyle that comes from wisdom. 14 However, if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, then stop bragging and living in ways that deny the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above. Instead, it is from the earth, natural and demonic. 16 Wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there is disorder and everything that is evil. 17 What of the wisdom from above? First, it is pure, and then peaceful, gentle, obedient, filled with mercy and good actions, fair, and genuine. 18 Those who make peace sow the seeds of justice by their peaceful acts.”

**GENERATIONAL BRIDGE:** Matthew Berglund -Pastor Andrew

**MESSAGE:** Momentum (The Beatitudes) #4: Meek

**PP#1:** Momentum (The Beatitudes): Meek

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” -Matthew 5:5

Momentum (The Beatitudes). “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” - Matthew 5:5.

We’ve gone up the hillside with Jesus, and we are listening to His message. Back in the Old Testament, God’s people gathered around the base of Mount Sinai, and God came down to

the mountain to share with them His message of the covenant of life. The people, it says, as God's descended presence flashed and thundered, were terrified. But here in the New Testament, it is very different. God is down here with us in Jesus, and He leads us up the mountain. God comes up with us and again speaks words of life. The covenant message is now what we need to become more like, what we need to grow into, what our hearts need to be filled with. He extends the blessed life to us by describing what it looks like, and also the pathway—the sequence of momentum—to grow in it.

**PP#2:** *Image of a wild horse(s) running free*

One of the images of the great American frontier is the wild mustang. Their flowing manes and thundering hooves evoke power, freedom, excitement, autonomy, and an indomitable spirit: like a fighter plane or a sports car. We romanticize the wild horse, seeing it also as a symbol of our inner selves, who we desire to be, what we long for.

And because we do, Jesus' teaching of the Eight Beatitudes seem weird and strange. Poor in spirit? How does that work when we hear the call of the independent, wild horse? Mourning our sin? Mustangs don't do that! They just snort and stomp and defiantly trot away.

And Jesus now says, "Blessed are the meek." Meek? That means weak, timid, soft-spoken, wimpy handshake, lacking a spine. One again Jesus seems all "meek and mild," nicey-nice, limp dishrag.

But remember, here, that Jesus is listing qualities that we need to pursue. Go after these, grow in these, in these is a fountain of blessing. Meekness is something God wants us to get more of. And when we unpack it a bit, godly meekness is extremely hard. It's challenging. Meek is NOT weak. Actually, it's one of the toughest things for us humans to do!

In the Bible, meekness often refers to the taming of wild creatures. Yes, the mustang is a great image of freedom, but if you think about it, it's also an image for *unusefulness*! The horse has been one of the most useful animals of all time. Yet, a wild and unbroken horse is useless. Wild horses resist a master, follow their immediate feelings; they are fearful, wide-eyed, run from danger.

In the Bible, people are often described as wild animals under sin. Without God, we are untamed, fearful, resist order, following our immediate feelings. And wild people are like wild horses. We may romanticize the image, but when we are untamed, unbroken, we are un-useful. Jeremiah, in chapter two, says that the people of Israel is like a wild donkey!

Meekness means taming the inner wildness, breaking the defiant spirit, bringing the soul under control, altering the tempers, managing the impulses, calming the passions, subduing the self, submitting to a master.

I think this is another part of spiritual humility. Being poor in spirit—the first Beatitude—is a humility that acknowledges that you cannot do it yourself. Mourning—the second Beatitude—is a humility that means being sorry for your sin. Meekness—the third Beatitude—is a humility that means submitting to God.

Think of your coworkers, or neighbors, or others you have to get along with. Those who are untamed, unruly, selfish must have it their way. They lash out when they don't get it. They are easily unhinged. Their turmoil spills out onto those around them. When the elevator is full, they start cursing. When the project hits a snag, somehow it's your fault. When they are having a bad day, everyone around them has a bad day. Their destructive patterns derail themselves and others.

An article three years ago in the *Smithsonian Magazine* described how the wild mustangs of the American prairie have now become a symbol of nuisance and destruction! They are growing in number and in range and in the destruction they are doing. Untamed means uncontrollable, and they are wreaking havoc and destruction wherever they go.

**PP#3:** *Image of a large, strong horse either saddled or pulling a wagon/coach.*

Tamed horses are still powerful and strong. Saddled horses have courage and resolve, a strong backbone. Wild horses may be beautiful, but they are valuable only in their potential.

Without meekness, we are short-tempered, lash out in frustration, have damaging anger, bring destruction to us and others around us. Meekness means calming the temper within, bringing it under order, moderating the soul, taming the wildness. *This* meekness, says Jesus, is blessed!

The term for taming a wild horse in the Old West was “breaking a horse.” It sounds so harsh and violent. And, I think, it true with people! It requires a surrender, a surrender of self that actually leads to a better life. It’s counterintuitive. We think we want to stay free. But that freedom is actually a bondage to the whims of our passions. We will never naturally want meekness, until we submit to Jesus. We must ask Jesus to break us!

**PP#4:** Charles Spurgeon

<u><b>Meekness</b></u>	delivers us from	<u><b>Wildness</b></u>
Humble		Pride
Gentle		Harshness
Patient		Anger
Forgiving		Vengeance
Contented		Ambition

The great preacher Charles Spurgeon described that godly meekness is humble, gentle, patient, forgiving and contented. And it delivers us from pride, harshness, anger, vengeance and ambition. Meekness gives you control over your anger. It subdues your impulsiveness. It changes how you speak, over harsh words and edges. It brings contentment, even in difficulty.

**PP#5:** Meekness = Submission

Sub-Mission: Put your mission *under* God’s mission

Another word for meekness is SUB-MISSION. Breaking your will means taking your personal, selfish mission for your life and *placing it under* God’s mission for you. You are shaped by it, subject to it. A Christian submits to God. Meek means being *under* God!

What does this look like? Remember, Jesus not only describes the blessed life, He also models it. And we see a vivid picture of Jesus’ meekness when He prays in the Garden of Gethsemane. It’s the night of His arrest. He knows He will be crucified the next day. And so, He goes to the Garden of Gethsemane to lay out His heart in prayer. He is raw, and honest. Matthew 26:39 says, “Then Jesus went a short distance farther and fell on His face [See? Sub-mitting. This is so hard! This requires tremendous inner strength and resolve. This is meekness!] and [He] prayed, “My Father, if it’s possible, take this cup of suffering away from me. [This is our usual human mission: to avoid suffering!] However [He prays meekly]—not what I want but what you

want.” That’s the not the unbroken power of a wild horse, but the awe-inspiring power of a bridled horse. Meekness is a resolve, an unmoveable power that determines to be set correctly.

The meek submit. They give up themselves. And yet, Jesus’ amazing promise, is that “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” When we give up our selfishness, God then places within our hands, all that we could ever want and more. Jesus was raised in glory, and elevated to His heavenly throne for eternity. We are truly blessed, and we do inherit uncountable blessings in this life, and in the life to come.

Okay, let’s apply this to our daily lives. Meekness means submitting to God’s Word, God’s will, and to God’s people.

**PP#6: Momentum (Beatitudes): Meek**

1. Sub-Mitting to God’s Word

“Therefore, with meekness, set aside all moral filth and the growth of wickedness, and welcome the word planted deep inside you—the very word that is able to save you.” - James 1:21

Submitting to God’s Word means to accept God’s description of the best life. It means seeing things God’s way, and living God’s way. We don’t tell God what is best, we listen to what God says is best. And God then plants His Word inside us, so that we can live by His best way. Jesus begins His Sermon on the Mount with the Beatitudes, and He ends it with the wise and foolish builders. The wise are those who hear His words and put them into practice, He says. Meekness means believing and doing what God says. The self will hears God’s words and says, “I have the right to disagree. I have the right to choose. I don’t like what this part says. It doesn’t make sense to me. Therefore, it must be the way I see it.” Question, oh ye meek of God: Do you push away God’s Word, or do you pursue it. It is the path of abundant life.

**PP#7: Momentum (Beatitudes): Meek**

1. Sub-Mission to God’s Word

2. Sub-Mission to God’s Will

“Then He went a short distance farther and fell on His face and prayed, “My Father, if it’s possible, take this cup of suffering away from me. However—not what I want but what you want.” -Matt. 26:39

Secondly, meekness means sub-mission to God’s will. God has a plan, a path that includes places that you would not necessarily choose to go on your own. We choose easy, comfort, self-gratification. God chooses for us work to be done, calling us out of our comfort zone, doing what He needs done to further His purpose. Our flesh resists God. It must be broken, crucified. We feel that resistance when we baulk and ask, “Why me?” “Why would God allow this to happen to me?” “Why can’t I have something I really want?” Repeat Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane, over and over again. “Not my will, but yours, O God.” Broken horses lean into their bridles and get to work.

**PP#8: Momentum (Beatitudes): Meek**

1. Sub-Mission to God’s Word

2. Sub-Mission to God’s Will

3. Sub-Mission to God’s People

“...and submit to each other out of respect for Christ.” -Ephesians 5:21

Thirdly, submission means to God's people. This may be the hardest yet! People can be hard to love—Amen?—let alone play nice with! They can be very difficult, and oblivious, and hurtful, and irritating. Not only do we have to hold our tongues and learn to get along, we are even called to submit to one another! What? But they don't deserve it. Right! But you don't submit to God's people because *they* deserve it. You do it because *Jesus* deserves it! Remember, He is our Master. His bit in our mouth controls what we say, and where we go, and what we do.

**PP#9:** Ephesians 5:18-22 (CEB)

15 So be careful to live your life wisely, not foolishly. 16 Take advantage of every opportunity because these are evil times. 17 Because of this, don't be ignorant, but understand the Lord's will. 18 Don't get drunk on wine, which produces depravity. Instead, be filled with the Spirit in the following ways: 19 speak to each other with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; sing and make music to the Lord in your hearts; 20 always give thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; 21 and submit to each other out of respect for Christ.

Paul is talking to the Christians in Ephesus—Ephesians 5—and tells them to be filled with the Holy Spirit. What does the Holy Spirit work within us? Let's look at Ephesians 5:15-21. "15 So be careful to live your life wisely, not foolishly. 16 Take advantage of every opportunity because these are evil times. 17 Because of this, don't be ignorant, but understand the Lord's will. 18 Don't get drunk on wine, which produces depravity. Instead, be filled with the Spirit in the following ways: 19 speak to each other with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; sing and make music to the Lord in your hearts; 20 always give thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; 21 and submit to each other out of respect for Christ."

Ah, we have the Holy Spirit within us. The Holy Spirit leads us to worship, singing songs of faith, having gratitude to God for all things, speaking to one another with godly words, "and submit to each other out of respect for Christ." (5:21)

**PP#10:** Momentum (Beatitudes): Meek

1. Sub-Mission to God's Word
2. Sub-Mission to God's Will
3. Sub-Mission to God's People

"...and submit to each other out of respect for Christ." -Ephesians 5:21

Hard? Yes. Impossible without the Holy Spirit. But when we live this meekness, there is blessing here! Folks, we need to be a member of a local church. They provide for you annoying brothers and sisters in Christ you can submit to! Meekness comes through the ongoing discipline of committed relationships. Self-directed Christians, autonomous Christians, individualist Christians, miss this! They may choose to follow their passions, but then they will not grow in this! If you walk away when someone upsets you, how can you grow?

So, meekness doesn't mean limp dishrag. It means putting down your selfish desire to have it your way, to justify your wounded feelings, to make it about you. Paul says in Philippians, "Consider others as more significant than yourself!"

Philippians 2:3, "Don't do anything for selfish purposes, but with meekness think of others as more significant than yourselves." That means even when you're RIGHT!

Meekness is tough, and it takes a courage that is stronger than wild strength! It means sub-mission to God's word, to God's will, and to God's people. Meekness looks like bearing

wounds, forgiving injuries, and returning good for evil. How different is our culture, with lawsuits, violence, being “anti,” tearing down, cancel. Christians look different!

How do we get to this third ring? We step up to the platform wanting more. We grab a hold of the first ring by admitting that we can’t do it in our own strength. That swings us to truly mourning our sin. And that gives us momentum to grab meekness. We now have the Holy Spirit, which is the only way we can have this meekness within us.

I want to close with a prayer for the Holy Spirit to come upon us. We have the Holy Spirit in us already, for sure. But I want to pray for an openness to having the Holy Spirit grow meekness within us. This is hard work. We can’t do it on our own. We need help. So, let’s pray.

**PRAYERS:** For Meekness -Pastor David

**CLOSING SONG:** *Have Thine Own Way, Lord*

**OFFERING:** -Pastor David

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS** -Pastor David

Next week’s message: Momentum, the Fourth Beatitude -Pastor David

**MEMORY VERSE** -Pastor David

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” -Matthew 5:5

**BENEDICTION** -Pastor David