

Surrendering Our Control

From Brokenness to Blessing #3 - Pastor Gary Combs - August 20, 2023 - Matthew 5:5; Psalm 37:1-11

INTRO: Good morning church! We are continuing our series entitled, “**From Brokenness to Blessing.**” The series is based on the eight blessings or beatitudes that Jesus declared in His Sermon on the Mount. These eight blessings of Jesus turn worldly wisdom upside down!

This week we’re looking at the 3rd beatitude:

Matthew 5:5 (ESV) Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

To be “blessed” means to be supremely happy, completely content. Blessed to the max (*macro*)! Jesus did not say what the world says, “Blessed are the strong and domineering...” No. He said...

Matthew 5:5 (GW) Blessed are those who are gentle. They will inherit the earth.

Jesus basically says that gentleness is the path to greatness, that meekness is the path to blessing! Yet meekness is probably one of the least admired qualities in America! We admire strength, not humility. We admire those who take charge, not those who surrender control to God. This might partly be because we don’t understand what meekness is. What is it?

Meekness is . . .

... not weakness.

... strength under control.

... submission to God.

The greatest Person who ever walked on planet earth was a meek and gentle man. His name is Jesus!

Matthew 11:29 (KJV) Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am **meek** and **lowly** in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Meekness toward God is that disposition of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. Gentleness or meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest. It stems from trust in God's goodness and control over the situation. The gentle person is not occupied with self at all. The meek have surrendered complete control of their lives to the Lord.

Need: Yet, many of us here today still cling to control. We think: “I got this. I can handle this problem... overcome this habit... control this situation... There are many reasons for this.

Some of us are too prideful to admit we need help. This was the first step on the road to blessing: “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” Blessed are those who admit they need help.

Some are too ashamed to ask God for help. They don’t feel worthy. Guilt overwhelms them. They continue to cling to past failures without releasing their grief to God: “Blessed are those who mourn.” This is the 2nd step.

Some are afraid. Fear of what they might have to give up keeps them from surrendering control to God.

Some are filled with worry and doubt. They can’t surrender control to God because they worry or doubt that what He offers is good and better than anything they could ever hope or ask for.

Trans: Yet, Jesus says that the meek, those who humbly surrender control to God, will inherit the earth.

BODY: In David’s Psalm 37, he instructed the people of God that living meekly, surrendering control to God, leads to a life of blessing. We can surrender our control to God to experience His blessing. How can we surrender our control to God to experience His blessing? The text gives **four ways** we can surrender our control to God to experience His blessing.

Read text: Psalm 37:1-11 (ESV) 1 Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers! 2 For they will soon fade like the grass and wither like the green herb. 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. 4 Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. 6 He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. 7 Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices! 8 Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil. 9 For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land. 10 In just a little while, the wicked will be no more; though you look carefully at his place, he will not be there. 11 But the meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace.

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HOW TO SURRENDER CONTROL AND EXPERIENCE GOD'S BLESSING:

1. Trust in the Lord as your true source.

EXP: (1-3) First, take note of v.11 "But the meek shall inherit the land." Jesus restated this: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." In this acrostic, wisdom poem, David instructs how the meek are to live. In v.3, he says, "Trust in the Lord." Don't "fret" (1), don't be "envious" (2), but "trust in the Lord" (3).

"Fret not" (1,7,8) (3x) (פָּרַח, *hārâ*) - to be hot, furious, burn, become angry. Don't be worried and upset about those who offend you or seem to be prospering using evil means.

"Be not envious" (1) (אָנָה, *qānā*) - to envy, be jealous, be envious. Don't be jealous of the apparent blessings of the wicked. For it is temporary. God's judgment is sure and it belongs to Him, not you.

"Trust" (3) (בָּטַח, *bāṭaḥ*) - to trust, trust in, to have confidence, be confident, to be bold, to be secure

"Do good" (3) - good, excellent (of its kind), rich, valuable in estimation

"Befriend faithfulness" (3) (רָעָה, *rā'â*) - to pasture, tend, graze, feed. The NKJV renders it: "Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness." See the Lord as your source.

ARG: God is the source of all comfort.

2 Corinthians 1:3 (NLT) All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the **source** of all comfort.

God promises to supply all our needs in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19 (ESV) And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

ILL: Worry is an addiction trigger. "Stress is a risk factor for developing an addiction. This risk is higher if you are exposed to stress in early childhood or exposed to chronic stress at any time. Stress is also a barrier to recovery for people in active addiction, and it is a risk factor for relapse. Chronic stress can cause anxiety. Both chronic stress and anxiety are risk factors for developing an addiction and relapse" (Good Rx).

APP: Will you stop fretting and worrying about those who've hurt or offended you? Will you stop being envious of what others have? Trust in the Lord as your source. Look to Him for your provision and life!

2. Delight in the Lord as your deepest desire.

EXP: (4) Look at v.4. This is a favorite memory verse. David instructs us to find our delight in the Lord.

"Delight" (4) (אָנָה, *ānāḡ*) - to be happy about, take exquisite delight in. "Expect all thy happiness from him, and seek it in him" (*Clarke's Commentary*).

"Desires of your heart" (4) - request, petition, desire. "Of the heart," that which is a deep desire. "The fact that a child loves his father, and finds his happiness in doing his will, will do much to regulate his own "wishes" or "desires," and will at the same time be a reason why the father will be disposed to comply with his requests" (*Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible*).

ARG: We can look to the Lord as our reward, our blessing, our all in all. In Him, all our desires are met.

Psalm 16:5 (ESV) LORD, you alone are my inheritance, my cup of blessing. You guard all that is mine.

ILL: God described David as "a man after His heart." That's what it means to "delight" in the Lord.

Acts 13:22 (ESV) ... [God] raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.'

APP: We all want our desires to be met. But we must surrender control of them to the Lord. Make Jesus the deepest desire of your heart. Then all your desires and needs will be met in Him.

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3. Commit to the Lord your life's path.

EXP: (5-6) Having surrendered control of meeting our needs and desires to the Lord, we now surrender our plans and path to the Lord.

"Commit" (5) (לָלַךְ, *gālal*) - Lit., "to roll upon." To commit, trust. "Roll thy way upon the Lord: probably, a metaphor taken from the camel, who lies down till his load be rolled upon him" (Clarke).

"Way" (5) - way, road, distance, journey, manner, path, course of life.

"He will act" (5) - God will go to work in your life. He will "bring to pass" in your life: "righteousness and justice" (6). Your life will shine like the noonday sun!

ARG: **Commit your path to God and He will establish your plans. Your success is in Him at work in you.**

Proverbs 16:3 (NIV) Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.

Meekly, without "grumbling or disputing," commit your life to God and He will make your life shine!

Philippians 2:14-15 (ESV) ¹⁴ Do all things without grumbling or disputing, ¹⁵ that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world

ILL: In Celebrate Recovery, you will hear folks introduce themselves like: "Hello, my name is John and I am a grateful believer in Jesus Christ and I struggle with _____ (alcohol, drugs, overeating, anger...)." We do this in order to emphasize that though we do still struggle with hurts, hang-ups, and habits, our identity is in our relationship with Jesus Christ. We have a new identity and we follow a new life path!

APP: Will you commit your life, your plans, your future, your identity to the Lord Jesus? Will you surrender control to Him?

4. Rest in the Lord for abundant joy and peace.

EXP: (7-11) Look at v.7. The ESV is "be still" and "wait patiently." Good translation. But I like the KJV here, which says, "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him." Still your heart. Still your mind. Be at rest in Jesus. The one who has surrendered control to Him is now at "rest" in Him!

"Be still" (7) (דָּמָם, *dāmam*) - Lit., "be dumb, be silent." To rest quietly." A chief attribute of meekness.

"Wait patiently" (7) - Lit., "not whirling nor writhing." Not anxiously waiting, but patiently. Not running in mental circles in your mind.

"Fret not yourself" (7,8) - In contrast to "being still" and "waiting patiently."

"Refrain from anger" (8) - "And forsake wrath (rage, burning anger)." Both are in contrast to resting. Both are the opposite of meekness. For meekness is "the reception of injuries with a belief that God will vindicate us. "Vengeance is his; he will repay," Romans 12:19. It little becomes us to take his place, and to do what he has promised to do. Meekness produces peace. It is proof of true greatness of soul. It comes from a heart too great to be moved by little insults. It looks upon those who offer them with pity. He that is constantly ruffled; that suffers every little insult or injury to throw him off his guard and to raise a storm of passion within, is at the mercy of every mortal that chooses to disturb him. He is like "the troubled sea that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Barnes).

ARG: **Remember Christ's invitation: Come to Me for rest!**

Matthew 11:29 (KJV) Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you **rest**. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find **rest** unto your souls.

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ILL: Anger is an addition trigger. "It is not uncommon for individuals that struggle with addiction to also have problems with their anger. You will often find that people that grew up in angry, violent households are more likely to struggle with addiction later on in life. This usually has to do with traumatic memories or never learning how to cope with anger in a healthy manner, resulting in people turning to drugs and alcohol as a form of self-medication." (<https://www.northstartransitions.com/post/the-role-of-anger-in-addiction>)

APP: There is a place where you can find real rest for your souls. Where you can find abundant joy and peace. It is in Christ Jesus! Will you be still and wait patiently on Him? Will you decide to rest in Jesus?

CONCLUSION: In my CG this week, a member of our group said, "It's kinda ambiguous to just say, 'give it to Jesus.' I've struggled with grief over the loss of a child and with the resulting anger, depression, guilt, and hurt. But I didn't know how to give it to Jesus until I started attending a weekly group to discuss my grief with other believers. That's when I began to find real help. I couldn't wait for that group. It really became a lifeline."

This is where our **Celebrate Recovery** ministry comes in. It's a place where you can spend time with other believers who are learning to SURRENDER CONTROL TO JESUS. In our **CR** we lead people through 8 steps to recovery. Here are the first three we've covered thus far:

R.E.C.O.V.E.R.Y: (8 principles based on the Beatitudes)

Realize I'm not God. I admit I'm powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and my life is unmanageable. *This is the "reality" step. "I've got a problem. I need help."*

Earnestly believe that God exists. I believe that I matter to him and that he alone has the power to help me recover. *The "hope" step. "God's the answer."*

Consciously choose to commit. I commit all my life and will to Christ's care and control. *The "commitment" step. "I'm giving my life to Jesus"*

Will you surrender your control and commit your life and will to Christ's care and control today? And having done so, will you decide to get real with other believers about your own hurts, habits, and hangups?

Let's pray.