

Day 10 Opposites Attack! - Part 2

Matthew 5:5(TLB) The meek and lowly are fortunate! For the whole wide world belongs to them.

Maybe your thoughts about the “Beatitudes” have been, that they are just nice comforting blessing sayings. Like Jesus was handing out blessings to whoever wanted one. You get a blessing, you get a blessing, all of you mountain climbers get a blessing! Prayerfully by now your perspective is changing. Jesus is teaching the way of God’s Kingdom. Here’s a sobering thought; “According to Jesus, if you get the beatitudes wrong, you miss out completely on the blessed life.” Anything else is simply counterfeit instead of the true blessings of the Kingdom.

Jesus taught us that the entrance to the Kingdom is recognizing our spiritual poverty. Mourning over our broken and sinful condition which connects us to the God of all comfort. Then Jesus gives us the key by which God’s Kingdom operates; meekness. Meekness stands in total opposition of how our culture and world systems operate. Until Jesus introduced meekness as a way of life; force, strength, power and control were the things man embraced and still are embracing as receiving what they want. But Jesus came to show us a different way. He came to show us the way of the cross. All Christ followers embrace the work of the cross, that which Jesus did for us on the cross, but we must also embrace the way of the cross. What is the way of the cross?

The way of the cross is the willingness to lay my life down so that Christ may live through me. We find our true lives, when we embrace the way of the cross. **The world will tell us to fight so that we may gain what we want. Jesus tells us to die so that we may find what we truly need.** The way of the world was birthed through lies, deception and thievery. The way of the cross was birthed through truth, humility, and sacrifice.

Jesus tells this powerful allegorical story in John 10: ***“Jesus said: I tell you for certain that only thieves and robbers climb over the fence instead of going in through the gate to the sheep pen. 2-3 But the gatekeeper opens the gate for the shepherd, and he goes in through it. The sheep know their shepherd’s voice. He calls each of them by name and leads them out.” John 10:1-3(CEV)***

Jesus tells this parable directly after He healed the blind man, which the Pharisees interrogated and tossed out. The Pharisees became so enraged with this man’s testimony, that they threw the man out. They castigated him as an uneducated sinful derelict, that had no right to teach them. Jesus finds this man outside and he (the previously blind man) immediately accepts Jesus for who He is, the Son of God. Jesus then tells this parable of the Good Shepherd. Then John records this in verse 6: ***“Jesus told the Pharisees this parable even though they didn’t understand a word of what he meant.” John 10:6(TPT)***

The Pharisees had sight, but could not see, the blind man had no sight, but clearly saw!

Jesus is clearly contrasting the way God’s kingdom operates and the way the religious leaders of the day operated. You see the religious leaders gained their positions through politicking, nepotism, ambitious maneuvering, through religious training, corruption and even bribery. They connived their way into leadership, and then exacted the price from the ordinary people. That’s why Jesus calls them thieves and robbers. In order for them to maintain this corrupt system, they oppressed the people by using the law to fleece the sheep. If the people did not go along aka, the previously blind man, they simply discarded them, like you would a piece of trash.

Then Jesus says this in verse 8: ***“All those who broke in before me are thieves who came to steal, but the sheep never listened to them.” (V8 TPT)*** Jesus is clearly contrasting His way of leading, to the Pharisees’ way of leading. Jesus makes it clear for anyone willing to listen, that His Kingdom is in complete opposition to any and all other kingdoms. Even if those kingdoms are cloaked in religiosity, but do not display His Spirit of meekness and self-sacrifice. They are birthed through deception, and in the end will do nothing but steal away the true life that He came to offer. Those who assume authority their own way instead of God’s way, are seen as thieves who break in, instead of as true shepherds who are being let in.

A thief’s only agenda is to take, to rob, to kill and to destroy. A thief will force his way in, and when threatened will use force to obtain the upper hand. Jesus makes that clear in verse 10: ***“A thief comes only to rob, kill, and destroy. I came so that everyone would have life, and have it in its fullest.” (CEV)*** The Spirit of meekness stands in complete contrast to this “win at all cost” attitude.

The spirit of this world was birthed in the devil, and Jesus called the religious leaders the children of the devil, because that murderous spirit was there from the beginning. ***“For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.” John 8:44(NLT)*** The devil gained access through deception and lies. He broke in and stole what was given to mankind. He took what he wanted and left a trail of death, destruction, violence and murder. So Jesus comes and overcomes the devil, not by exerting greater force, but by humble submission to the Father’s will. Jesus’ meekness defeats the god of this world. So, He says, be happy, I beat this world and the world’s system. So now, if you are willing to be meek like Me, the world that the thief stole, I will give it to you!

The true Shepherd has the power to do what is necessary to give the sheep a life that is abundant and full. How can we recognize the true Shepherd? Jesus tells us: ***“I am the good shepherd, and the good shepherd gives up his life for his sheep.” John 10:11(CEV)*** The true Shepherd lays down His life, not because He has to, but because He wants to. Meekness is power under control. ***“The Father loves me, because I give up my life, so that I may receive it back again. 18 No one takes my life from me. I give it up willingly! I have the power to give it up and the power to receive it back again, just as my Father commanded me to do.” John 10:17-18(CEV)***

When we operate in meekness our goal is not to gain but give. We do not give because we have to give, we give because we want to give. We do not follow a stranger’s voice, we follow our Father’s voice. The world will call this kind of life crazy, just like they said about our Shepherd, that He is crazy and has a demon. **Crazy is doing what everybody else is doing and thinking that it will please the Father.**

Meekness is doing what the Father commands us to do. It may seem crazy, but in the end it leads to the abundant life.

Reflection and Prayer:

- **Read John chapter 9 and 10. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through these passages.**
- **Write any thoughts and ideas down. Share it with someone.**
- **Ask the Lord Jesus to show you how you can practically lay down your life for others. Then do it!**
- **Pray for the strength to be obedient to your Father’s voice.**