

The Meek and Lowly Jesus

Come unto me, all ye that labour 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

Lest we forget, the ways of God are contrary to the ways of a man. Man's way up is to climb the ladder of success, often using others as stepping-stones to gain advantage. God's way up ... is down. Jesus said, ***"whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted"*** Matthew 23:12. Call this a "principle of God" if you will, but it is one that has no exceptions. Many in the modern church have never understood those things which God calls "blessed." Almost universally, our tendency is to see the person with an elevated position in life and possessing much wealth, and say they are "blessed." Jesus does not agree, however. He began early in His ministry to define for all who can receive it, what it means to be "blessed" when He said...

"Blessed are the poor in spirit..." Matthew 5:3. The remainder of this verse says, ***"...for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*** I have separated these for the sake of those who can see and understand. This "blessing" is in what the people "are," and not in what they "possess." The "poor in spirit" speaks of a "beggar in spirit." This is certainly not those who beg to receive their sustenance from man, but the one who, regardless of their position in this life, approaches God with the attitude, "If you do not give to me, I have nothing." They understand, their great need is not for "things" of this world but for Christ Himself.

"Blessed are they that mourn..." Matthew 5:4 According to Isaiah's prophecy of Messiah, Jesus was both anointed and sent ***"to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, oil of joy for sadness, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness"*** Isaiah 61:3. These are not those who are depressed by reason of their circumstances; they are rather those whom God has chosen to be His ***"...trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."*** A hundred years after Isaiah wrote these words, when God sent the armies of Babylon to destroy Jerusalem, He first sent an angel with a writer's inkhorn into the streets of the city to ***"set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof"*** Ezekiel 9:4. These were those who ***"mourn in Zion."*** According to the Hebrew text, God said, "Write my name on their foreheads." When the destroyers came, God commanded them, ***"Come not near any man upon whom is the mark..."*** Ezekiel 9:6. They who ***"mourn in Zion"*** are those saints of God who grieve over both the wickedness of the world, and the abominations committed in the house of God Ezekiel 8:5-17.

Jesus continued His introduction to His "Sermon on the

Mount" by pronouncing numerous other "blessings." He said, ***"Blessed are the meek...; Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness...; Blessed are the merciful...; Blessed are the pure in heart...; Blessed are the peacemakers..."*** His final two blessings are most hard for most Christians to receive. He said, ***"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"*** Matthew 5:10, and ***"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake"*** Matthew 5:11.

For those who can receive it, the blessing is not in what these will receive hereafter, but in what they "are" right now. Those who can "turn the other cheek when slapped" Matthew 5:39, "walk the extra mile when compelled" Matthew 5:41, and "give their cloak also when sued at law" Matthew 5:40, are an incredibly blessed people, and there are few such among us. The blessing for "doing the right thing" is in "doing the right thing!" The blessing in giving is not in receiving as we have been taught. Jesus said, ***"It is more blessed to give than to receive"*** Acts 20:35.

I recently read a religious message in which the writer wrote with much emphasis, ***"Jesus was not meek and mild."*** I was amazed at how distressed I was over these few words. I wanted for the first time in my life to write the editors of the magazine to protest, but I chose not to do so. Yet, I have not been able to get these words out of my mind. I thought, ***"If Jesus was not 'meek and mild' He must have been a liar, because He so clearly said, 'I am meek and lowly in heart'."*** He told us we would ***"find rest unto our souls"*** if we would take His yoke of meekness and lowliness upon ourselves. It is not a yoke of bondage, as some may think. To be "yoked with Christ" is to be one with Christ, having His heart, His mind, and His nature working in us. It is the "glorious liberty" of the Sons of God Romans 8:21. We are ***"freed from sin"*** in the death of Jesus Romans 6:7, 18, 22. We are also ***"cleansed from all unrighteousness"*** I John 1:9 in His precious blood which He shed for us. We are freed from the need to take our own defense, or to revile again those who first revile us I Peter 2:23.

"...if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted..." II Corinthians 11:4.

For any to preach that Jesus is not ***"meek and lowly"*** as He said of Himself, or that Jesus was a "radical reformer" is quite obviously to preach ***"another Jesus."*** While seeking to release Jesus, Pilate brought a prisoner named Barabbas, who had been convicted and sentenced to death for insurrection. Standing him beside Jesus, Pilate gave a choice to the Jews; ***"Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?"*** Matthew 27:17. Consider the choice which was set before

them. The name "Bar-abbas" means "son of the father." Barabbas was a false Christ, and a "radical reformer" who fit the Jews' idea of their messiah better than the meek and lowly Jesus, because he had led a popular insurrection against Rome. Pilate thought surely the people would overwhelmingly choose Jesus over this violent man, but it was not to be so. Instead, they cried ***"Give us Barabbas!"*** Pilate responded, ***"What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ, to which all the Jews said, 'Let him be crucified'"*** Matthew 27:17-22. There is very little difference between the events of that day in Pilate's judgment hall and what is happening today in many churches across America. I call it "the cry for Barabbas." Wherever ***"another Jesus"*** is preached, it is "another spirit" that finds a place in that church or ministry. The Spirit of antichrist receives a place among the people of God, and many believe he is in fact God II Thessalonians 2:4.


The Lowest Common Denominator

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John 17:21

Many people believe Jesus prayed for the entire "church world" to come together in unity, regardless of their differences. One of the goals of TBN, as often stated by founders Paul and Jan Crouch, was that the Roman Catholic, the Eastern Orthodox, and the Protestant church would be united as one before the return of Jesus Christ. In order to do this, a "common denominator" must be found which all could agree upon. Every group, whether right or wrong, would sacrifice that which was most precious to them upon the altar of unity if we could agree upon the lowest possible common denominator. After the day of Pentecost, the Jewish leaders would have agreed to unity with the apostles if they would simply ceased to preach in the name of Jesus Christ. Acts 4:18. Such a unity may have seemed wonderful at the time, but it would have been the end of the church!

Jesus' prayer was that we all would be one in the Father and in His Son, exactly as Jesus said, ***"...as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."*** This is an individual matter between every believer and our Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone who is one with the Father and with His Son Jesus, will also have fellowship one with another. On the other hand, should the church at Smyrna Revelation 2:8-10, and the church at Philadelphia Revelation 3:7-10, find a "common denominator" with the church of the Laodiceans? Revelation 3:14-19, or perhaps with the church in Thyatira where Jezebel was a prophetess who seduced the people to commit fornication? Revelation 2:18-22. We cannot accept the lowest common denominator. We serve the one who brings us to the highest and the best. Our "common denominator" is Jesus Christ, who ***"loved us, and washed us from our sins in his***

own blood..." Revelation 1:5. The Apostle John said, ***"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world"*** I John 4:17. Only when this scripture is fulfilled will the world believe ***"Jesus is the Christ"*** I John 5:1, and it is the true God who sent Him into the world.



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