



## *Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost*

October 17, 2021

\*Call to Worship

*Wonderful is the God of Christ, who gathers the poor of the earth.*

***Glorious is our God, who wipes away the tears of sorrow.***

*Wonderful is the God of Christ, who gives inheritance to the meek.*

***Glorious is our God, who satisfies the hunger and thirst of those who seek.***

*Wonderful is the God of Christ, who gives mercy to the merciful.*

***Glorious is our God, who gives vision to the pure in heart.***

*Wonderful is the God of Christ, who adopts the peacemakers.*

***Glorious is our God, who lifts high the persecuted.***

*Wonderful is the God of Christ, who finds the lost.*

***Glorious is our God, who awakens the dead.***

\*Hymn of Praise

*"How Great Thou Art"*

UMH 77

**\*Opening Prayer**

*Lord our God, you yourself remind us through your Word that all our religious practices are not worth anything if we use them to bend you our way. God, may we come to you in humility and repentance, ready to encounter you in love and to turn your way. Accept us as your sons and daughters, together with Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord forever.*

**Share How You Can Present Your Offering to God**

Make your offering personal...through a donation or an act of service...bring to God an offering of praise and gratitude!

**Sing the Doxology Together**

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

**We Bow Our Hearts with Prayers for One Another at Faith and Hope...**

As we prepare to go our separate ways, we do so graciously, praying God's blessings upon one another...today drawing on Paul's Prayer in Colossians 1:9-12:

*May God give you full insight into his will for your lives,  
along with all wisdom and spiritual understanding,  
so that your life may be worthy of the Lord  
and entirely pleasing to him.*

*And may you bear fruit in active goodness of every kind,  
continually growing in your knowledge and understanding of God.*

*And may God give you the strength you need  
to endure whatever comes with patience and fortitude,  
all the while giving thanks to God  
who has enabled you to share  
in the inheritance that belongs to God's holy people.*

**The Lord's Prayer**

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

God's Word

Matthew 5:5

*The Word of God for the people of God...Thanks be to God!*

Message

***"Content with Just Who You Are"***

Pastor Clark

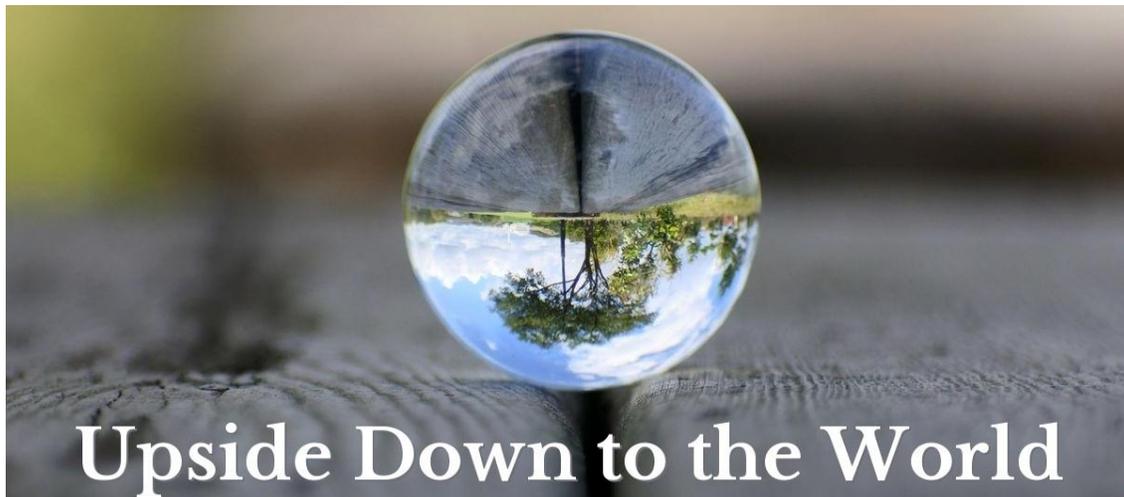
\*Hymn of Faith

*"Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart"*

UMH 500

Blessing

*As you go on with your day, remember:  
God always keeps his promises.  
He is unfailingly gracious toward us.  
When we stumble, he is there to catch us;  
when we are weighed down by grief or trouble,  
he is there to strengthen and encourage us.  
So go from here in the knowledge  
that the love and mercy of God goes with you.*



## **“Content with Just Who You Are”**

Matthew 5:5

### **Introduction**

Suppose we were to come up with a set of Beatitudes for the 21st Century as Bryan Wilkerson did a few years back. What if we made a list of the kinds of people who seem to be well-off—who seem to have it made—by today's standards? It might go something like this:

*Blessed are the rich and famous, because they can always get a seat at the best restaurants.*

*Blessed are the good-looking, for they shall be on the cover of People magazine.*

*Blessed are those who party, for they know how to have fun.*

*Blessed are those who take first place in the division, for they shall have momentum going into the play-offs.*

*Blessed are the movers and shakers, for they shall make a name for themselves.*

*Blessed are those who demand their rights, for they shall not be overlooked.*

*Blessed are the healthy and fit, because they don't mind being seen in a bathing suit.*

*Blessed are those who make it to the top, because they get to look down on everyone else.*

**However, if Jesus ran the world, these would not be the beatitudes he would have us live.** In fact, we discover another of them today in Matthew 5:5 in both the NLT and MSG translations:

*“God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth.”*

*“You’re blessed when you’re content with just who you are—no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought.”*

We live in an age of discontent. Not just discontent about our possessions but deeper. It’s an identity discontentment. We are not satisfied with our place in this world. We are not satisfied with status in this world. Compared to what we see of other’s lives on Facebook and the like, everyone else’s lives seem so better placed than our own. We feel inadequate, we feel like underachievers. We want more. We want a better place, a better showing in the eyes of others, a better following on Facebook and Twitter.

Jesus’ response? Jesus goes completely against the grain. It startles us with its simplicity and its starkness: God blesses the meek, the humble, those who are content with who they are. God turns it all upside down when we hear that God wants to shine on the very people we thought had lost the sweepstakes of success and blessing in our world’s scheme of things. God startles us when we hear that He will bring greater satisfaction, fulfillment, and joy than anything this world can offer.

## ***Not What You Think It Is***

Bryan Wilkerson...after discussing the Beatitudes with a group of people at his church, found that most agreed that this beatitude made the least sense.

Meek sounds an awful lot like "weak," someone said. "Yeah," someone else added, "Imagine going for a job interview and telling the hiring manager that you're *"meek"*! And if being meek isn't likely to get you a job, how in the world will it get you the whole earth? And what does it mean to inherit the earth?

***It doesn't mean weak or timid or indecisive or easy-going.*** In our day, to be meek or humble usually translates into not having the strength to stand up to the realities our hard world.

One day, a bus driver was driving along his usual route. He didn't encounter any problems for the first few stops; a few people got on, a few got off, and things went generally well. At one stop, however, a big hulk of a man got on. He was 6' 8" tall, built like a wrestler, with long arms like tree trunks. He glared at the driver and told him, ***"Big John doesn't pay!"*** Then he sat down at the back of the bus. The driver was 5' 3" tall, thin, and very meek, so he didn't argue with Big John. But he wasn't happy about it.

The next day, the same thing happened. Big John got on again, made a big show of refusing to pay, and sat down. It happened the next day, and again the day after that. The bus driver began to lose sleep over the way Big John was taking advantage of him.

Finally, he could stand it no longer. He signed up for body building courses, karate, judo, and a class on finding your self-esteem. By the end of the summer, the bus driver had become quite strong and felt really good about himself.

The next Monday, Big John entered the bus and again declared, ***"Big John doesn't pay!"*** Enraged, the driver stood up, glared back at Big John, and bellowed, ***"And why not?!"***

With a surprised look on his face, Big John replied, ***"Big John has a bus pass."***

## ***An Even Greater Strength***

So, what does the word "meek" mean exactly? Outwardly, it's like ***gentleness***, in that it implies sensitivity and kindness in dealing with other people. Inwardly, it's like ***humility***, in that it involves an honest assessment of ourselves in relation to God and others. Someone described meekness as ***"a controlled desire to see others' interests advance ahead of one's own."***

"Controlled" is an interesting word, because in the Greek language the word "meek" was sometimes used to describe a wild animal that had been tamed. The animal's strength is still there, but it's under control. Meekness has thus been defined as ***"strength under control."*** A meek person isn't weak. On

the contrary, **a meek person knows his strength, but is able to restrain it in the interests of others, or in the pursuit of some higher purpose.** (Wilkerson)

We tend to think of meekness as something we show toward others, but it begins with our attitude toward God. **The meek person knows that his needs and his future are in God's hands**, so he doesn't need to compete with others to get what he wants, needs, or thinks is fair. Meekness means **yielding your agenda to God and others.**

People who are meek and humble rest secure in their place in life, rest secure that God has them in His hands. They don't need to stress or strain or struggle to become something they are not. They have the strength to be content with who they are.

Taylor University is a Christian college in Indiana. Years ago, they were pleased to learn that an African student, **Sam**, was going to be enrolling in their school. This was before it was commonplace for international students to come to the U.S. to study. He was a bright young man with great promise, and the school felt honored to have him. When he arrived on campus, the President of the University took him on a tour, showing him all the dorms. When the tour was over, the President asked Sam where he would like to live. The young man replied, "If there is a room that no one wants, give that room to me." The President turned away in tears. Over the years he had welcomed thousands of Christian men and women to the campus, and none had ever made such a request.

*"If there is a room that no one wants, give that room to me."* That's the kind of meekness Jesus talks about in the Beatitudes.

*If there is a job that no one wants to do, I'll do that job.*

*If there's a kid that no one wants to eat lunch with, I'll eat with that kid.*

*If there's a piece of toast that's burnt, I'll take that piece.*

*If there's a parking space that's far away from the church, I'll park in that space.*

*If there's a service time that's less convenient for people, I'll worship at that service.*

*If there's a hardship someone has to endure, I'll take that hardship.*

*If there's a sacrifice someone needs to make, I'll make that sacrifice.*

### **Owners of What Can't Be Bought**

*"God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth."*

I love how Eugene Peterson translates the back half of this verse...*"That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought."*

This world clamors after the things that can be bought thinking that is where to find satisfaction and contentment. The mantra of our day is this: *"you are what you own, so own all you can."* Max Lucado in his new book **"You Were Made for This Moment,"** says people today, *"take on the liability, borrow*

*the money, and saddle themselves with budget-busting mortgages. The average American household carries more than \$145,000 in debt, including nearly \$7,000 in credit card debt. We worship stuff, hoping stuff will bring us life.”* What’s behind all this? The unsettled feeling we are missing out, that we don’t fair all too well in that colossal comparison game that pits us against the best of our neighbors Facebook selves.

Jesus? He tells you that *“the meek, the humble will inherit the earth. Jesus tells us not to lay up treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.”*  
Matthew 6:19-20

My intuitive instincts tell me that *“everything that can’t be bought”* is indeed what will last for all eternity! What an investment! And what a **reversal of fortunes** from the way our world tends to think! We think the power-grabbing wealthy are the ones who end up with the treasure. Jesus says not so! Those who trust Him and rely upon His provision and place for them will end up with a magnificent reversal of fortune!

At the age of 19, **Kylie Bisutti** beat out 10,000 other contestants in the 2009 Victoria's Secret Model Search contest. But Bisutti said that getting married and growing in her Christian faith caused her to see her career in a different light. In an interview Kylie said,

[The modeling world] is a very hard industry to be in without falling into things you don't want to do .... It's a very tempting industry .... Victoria's Secret was my absolutely biggest goal in life, and it was all I ever wanted career-wise .... [But] I'm a Christian, and reading the Bible more, I was becoming more convicted about it .... My body should only be for my husband, and it's just a sacred thing. I didn't really want to be that kind of role model for younger girls because I had a lot of younger Christian girls that were looking up to me and then thinking that it was OK for them to walk around and show their bodies in lingerie to guys. It was pretty crazy because I finally achieved my biggest dream, the dream that I always wanted, but when I finally got it, it wasn't all that I thought it would be.

Kylie Bisutti is experiencing a life-reversal and discovering the kind of life Jesus loves to bless!

## **Conclusion**

In my studies this week, I discovered that Psalm 37 is often linked with this beatitude. Here are the first several verses. I think you will see why:

*Don't worry about the wicked or envy those who do wrong.*

*<sup>2</sup> For like grass, they soon fade away. Like spring flowers, they soon wither.*

*<sup>3</sup> Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper.*

*<sup>4</sup> Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires.*

*Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you.*

*<sup>6</sup> He will make your innocence radiate like the dawn,  
and the justice of your cause will shine like the noonday sun.*

Those verses describe what it means to be meek, to be humble of heart, to trust God with your place in life. How will you be content with your place in life? How will you be content with just who God made you to be?



### **Tailgate Party/Chili Cook Off on October 30**

***We are throwing a party!*** A tailgate party for the OSU vs Penn State match-up! Along with a Chili Cook Off! On Saturday October 30 at Faith UMC (time TBD once we find out when the game will be telecast) we invite you to share in the tailgate excitement! Cornhole games. Something for all ages. Great chili to sample. Desserts to enjoy. Big game atmosphere to pump you up! Bring your lawn chairs.

***We need Chili makers!*** We want to have at least ten different kinds of chili on hand to see who will win this year's cook off. Talk to Dustin or enter online or fill out the card in the rear today before you leave to sign up.

***Hopeful Hearts: Thanks to all who helped serving this month!*** And for those who made donations of clothing for the children.

***Educare will receive a makeover of sorts in the coming months:*** a brand new playground will be installed towards the end of the month, new hallway flooring and Educare office flooring will be installed over the holidays when school is out of session, and new hallway lighting will be installed in October or early November.

### ***Advent Bible Study/Small Group "The Songs of Advent"***

*As familiar as we are with the songs of Christmas, there are four songs recorded in the Bible to celebrate the birth of Jesus that most of us aren't familiar with. The angels sang a song to the shepherds. Mary sang a song to God after she had time to get over the shocking news that she was going to be the mother of the Savior. Simeon also had a song. Then there's Zechariah's song. Zechariah was an elderly priest who sang after being visited by an angel. We will meet in person on Mondays starting November 29 and continue through December 20 and will meet from 7:00-8:00 PM at Faith UMC. Zoom participation possible with advance notice. There is a \$5 cost for participation.*



- *Earl Kantner, in his final days of his earthly journey; pray for Onn, family*
- *Jan Yaple is moving to a special dialysis rehab center in Westerville*
- *Norma Jacks daughter Cindy is gravely ill with Parkinson's disease*
- *Jewell Edwards' grandson, Connor, has been diagnosed with a brain lesion*
- *Debbie Piermont will have aneurysm surgery on October 20*
- *Marsha Waibel, cancer has returned; surgery upcoming*
- *Debbie Fields dealing with significant heart arrhythmia issues*
- *Dan Matthew, recovering from successful aneurysm surgery*
- *Jan Smith from Faith Church continuing treatments*
- *Sarah Cory and Guy Cory now both in Bickford Senior Living*
- *For doctors, nurses, medical staff, EMS personnel dealing with COVID*
- *Community Focus: Rebuilding a sense of community in our COVID era*
- *National Focus: Police and fire departments in the face of mounting danger*
- *World Focus: Getting the COVID vaccines to remote corners of the globe*

