

IN MEEKNESS THE SPIRITUAL INHERIT THE EARTH

Jonathon Wills, Presbytery Word for week commencing Sunday 28 September 2025
Transcription of recording, slightly edited

Good morning, everyone. It is always great to be together on these first Sundays of the month. We are going to begin by reading in Matthew chapter 5 which is the passage of Scripture known as the Beatitudes. We want to look at the first three elements of blessing here today and then to consider the manner in which we live and relate with one another as sons of God who are recipients of the blessing of God. It says here in Matthew chapter 5 verse 1, 'And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated, His disciples came to Him. Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." '

We could continue and read all of them there, but just for our purposes this morning, we are going to focus on the first three of these initiatives of blessing that Jesus is ministering. The first question that comes as we read through there is: What is the blessing of God? The blessing of God, which God promised to Abraham, is sonship. It is to be born again as a new creation son of God. When we think blessing, we think a son of God. We think sonship. Those who receive this blessing to be born again as a son of God are those who are blessed. Blessing needs to be understood in relation to the covenant purpose and agenda of Yahweh *Elohim*. That agenda and initiative was, 'Let Us make man in Our image and according to Our likeness.' That is the centrepiece initiative of the gospel. Everything that then proceeds from there is with a view toward bringing us forth as men in the image and likeness of God. God does not bless us for any other purpose, and every other element of blessing proceeds from that blessing of becoming a son of God.

Paul highlighted this in Galatians chapter 3 verses 13 to 14. Let us read these verses. He said, 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us, (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree") ... [Why did Christ come in this manner and redeem us from this curse of the law?] ...

that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.'

The blessing of Abraham is the promise of the Spirit through faith which is to be a son of God. When the Lord first came to Abram and called him out of his country, his family and his father's house to journey to a land of promise, he said to him in Genesis 12 verse 1, 'I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing... [Do you see how it flows? 'I will bless you, and when you receive that blessing, you will then be a blessing']...I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you... [and this is to Abraham]; ...and in you... [the one who is to receive the blessing of God] ...in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' The Lord was promising to bless Abraham with a son.

Christ, who is the word of the Lord, then met Abram in Genesis 15 verse 1 and said, ' "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." He then took Abram outside...' I know that we are familiar with these verses and even this flow of it, but I was thinking this morning, I could hear this every day and not grow tired of it. In understanding the initiative to bless Abraham in a particular way so that in Abraham all the families of the earth would then know and be recipients of that same blessing, He comes and says, 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.... Then He took Abram outside and said, "Look now toward heaven. and count the stars if you are able to number them." ' Could I ask all of us (I know we have heard these verses before), could you hear them today almost as if it is the first time you have heard them? The initiative of the Lord to you to say, 'Do not be afraid. I am your shield of faith, and I am your life. I am your exceedingly great reward.' Then receive the initiative from the Lord even right now as He takes *you* outside and says, 'Look now and behold the multiplied fruit of this blessing of God.' ' "Look now toward heaven and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be [all

those who are blessed in Abraham].” And Abraham believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.’ Abraham was justified by faith.

All of the families of the earth would be blessed in Abraham because they would become his descendants. It is not just a matter of saying, ‘Abraham, I am going to bless you. And then everyone on the earth is going to be blessed because I blessed you.’ No, all of the families of the earth have an opportunity to be blessed with father Abraham if they become his sons. That is the context of the blessing. ‘It is to your descendants.’ All of the families of the earth - all of the nations of the earth have opportunity to become Abraham's sons - his descendants. The sons of Abraham would live in faith (and could I put it this way) for this starry hope. He said, ‘Look now toward the stars.’ All of the sons of Abraham live in faith for this starry hope because the kingdom of heaven belongs to them. Christ had offered Himself (here in Genesis 15) to be Abraham's son; to be Abraham's faith; to be his life. Christ would be his exceedingly great reward when on the day of resurrection Abraham would receive from Christ - from the substance of Christ's own resurrection body - his own resurrection body that was as much physical as it was spiritual. His body would be raised up from the dust and then clothed with his heavenly body. This was the inheritance and the blessing that Christ was coming and ministering to Abraham.

When Abraham had offered his only son, Isaac, to God the Father on Mount Moriah (this is now in Genesis chapter 22) and had received from the Father, Christ as his son, He said to him, this is verse 17 of Genesis 22, ‘Blessing, I will bless you, and multiplying, I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven.’ Let us remember that first element of blessing. ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’ These are the ones who are lit up as stars in the heavens that Abraham beheld - even at their initial birth, and then further in all of their starry glory on the day of resurrection. ‘I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their

enemies. In your seed, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed because you obeyed My voice.’

Paul then confirmed in Galatians 3 verse 16 that the promise of the blessing was made to Abraham and to his Seed - one Seed - that is Christ. Christ was the Son in whom all of the nations would then receive this blessing. Through Christ (Abraham's son in the flesh), all the families of the earth could receive the promise of the Spirit through faith and be born again as new creation sons of God. They could all receive the hope of the adoption which is to be raised in the image and likeness of God when the last trumpet sounds on the day of resurrection. When Christ returns, our bodies will be changed and redeemed when we are raised up from the substance of Christ's resurrection body. Our physical bodies will be like His, from His immortal and incorruptible substance. Our heavenly body, which has been storing up treasure each day as we have walked blameless before the Lord, will clothe the physical body, making it a spiritual body and temple of the Holy Spirit for eternity. Amen. This is the blessing that was being ministered to Abraham, and Abraham believed it. This is the blessing that we have and that we are possessing and that we are living in faith for - in hope for that day of resurrection. It ought to excite us every single morning when we get up.

The blessing of Abraham, which is the blessing of God, begins with the adoption. A person who has been illuminated to the hope of their sonship in Christ, having looked toward the heavens (the heavenly city) and seen the stars, and believes just as Abraham did, receives the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of adoption, into their spirit and they cry out, ‘Abba, Father’. As a person receives the Spirit of adoption, Christ writes on them the name of the Father and the name of the city (the heavenly city), the New Jerusalem, because their citizenship now belongs to the kingdom of heaven. They receive a heavenly body and a title deed to land in the heavenly city. The new believer's cry of ‘Abba, Father’ is in response to the Father calling them, ‘My son’. This blessing of adoption continues as the Spirit of the Son (who carries the seed of a person's name) is then sent forth into their spirit crying, ‘Abba, Father’. As this wonderful union takes place, someone

has been brought forth as a new creation son of God, and the human spirit is reborn. Through this action, Christ then writes His new name on them. This is what it means to receive the blessing of God, which is the blessing of Abraham.

I know I have summarised that through in relationship to the blessing given to Abraham and also the steps of salvation that then bring forth a son of God. We have been hearing about these things for a long time, and we ought to be able to summarise them quickly. I actually did all of my notes, even beyond what I am going to say this morning, in about 10 minutes with the kids for devotions the other morning. I said to them at the end of it, 'And that is what we are going to talk about on Sunday.' They then suggested that I just do it in 10 minutes today instead of taking fifty or fifty-five minutes, at which time I then thought, 'Well, maybe we could have a crack at it five times in 10 minutes and then we just run it through.' We do it, yes, 10 minutes; let us do it again and try again. We should be able to apprehend these things in 5 to 10 minutes. We ought to be speaking it to one another to say, 'This blessing of God given to Abraham, can I run it through in relationship to how the Lord proceeded through and revealed all of these things to Abraham and then the impact of that for us?'

Jesus tells us that this blessing of God... (this is the context for what we are saying this morning - the blessing of God - sonship) ... it belongs to those who are poor in spirit. As we read in Matthew 5 verse 3, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' When a person receives the blessing of sonship, they belong to the kingdom of heaven. Their citizenship is in heaven in the heavenly bride city (the New Jerusalem), and their fellowship is with the Father and the Son. Keeping in mind the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have all come and abided in the heart of this new believer, new creation son of God. As we then proceed forward into baptism, God abides in us and then we abide in Him. The work of this bride city is to bring forth children of God. These children, born either in covenant homes or through evangelistic ministry, belong to the Father and the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

Bankrupt in spirit describes a person's demeanour as they meet Christ their Lord each day. It describes someone who is seeing the high calling of their sonship, but at the same time, seeing the true nature of their fallen condition in marriage and in family. In the light of His glory, I see that I am poor, that I am empty, that I am bankrupt before Him. That is, I have no innate right or goodness within me that qualifies me for His high calling or qualifies me to enter into His fellowship, which is the kingdom of God. I recognise that the qualification for that does not reside in me and in anything good or right that I have done previously or could even do today. My hope is for His provision today.

For men, this bankruptcy will be to recognise that our natural fallen default is toward wrath and doubting. Why do we say that? Because Paul tells us that. Men, we have to get comfortable with the admission that my natural default is toward wrath and doubting and that without the Lord's help, I have no capacity to genuinely meet or to live by offering. We will be defensive, controlling and angry. Anger will manifest in a multitude of different ways. But as we meet the Lord, bankrupt in spirit each day, the Lord is able to meet us as He did Abraham when He said, 'Do not fear.' Fear drives so much of the wrath and doubting. The Lord comes to deliver us of the fear of death that we might then be delivered of the propensity toward wrath and doubting. 'I am your shield of faith. I am your life. So stop pressing for your own life to be the thing that is manifest and revealed today.' We can lift our focus toward our own sanctification and the sanctification of our wife and our children. Why can we do that? Because He calls us to. That is why the Lord said, 'Can you hear today. Look now.' Each day He calls us to come to Him and to *look now* toward heaven and to believe for the hope of our sanctification as a son of God, while recognising that, left to our own devices, we fall so far short from that. We cry out to Him each day. We draw near.

For women, this will be recognising that the natural fall in default is toward anxiety and victimhood. A woman can feel like a victim of her husband's lack of appreciation when she perceives that she is not being adequately regarded for her work. She is seeking a

verification through the things that she is doing, the initiatives that she believes are good and right within the home. When that is not adequately appreciated or responded to, she feels like a victim. She feels isolated when he does not look into her face and agree with what she thinks is right and when she is left to bear her own load. As she meets the Lord bankrupt in spirit each day, the Lord is able to meet her just as He did Sarah. She is able to bring forth children by the Spirit with a gentle and quiet spirit. She is able to multiply the fellowship of Yahweh within the home without the anxious press of control; without her alternatives; and without any fear of adjustment coming to her. She is not invalid as a woman because a word is spoken to her that directs her in a particular way, or because her initiatives that are controlling are not received. She is able to meet the Lord bankrupt in spirit each day, just as her mother Sarah did, so that she then proceeds and lives, not just as a daughter of Sarah, but as a daughter of Abraham and Sarah - living by that faith.

As we mourn alone, we are able to lift up holy hands in prayer, believing for the fruitfulness of each one's sanctification. I am not only believing for my own sanctification, but I am lifting up holy hands in prayer, believing for the fruitfulness of *your* sanctification. I am believing for the good of God in you, instead of being defensive and reactive to the things that you might be doing or saying (or not doing and not saying) toward me. We are able to ask for the wisdom which we have clearly lacked, asking without doubting and without being tossed by uncertainty. We can see then that the fruit of not asking for wisdom and proceeding in what seems right in our own eyes is that we are tossed about - that there is uncertainty within us, and we doubt - ultimately doubting that what the Lord is saying is true.

Meeting Christ in this manner is where His word becomes bitter in our bellies. It is from this place of bankruptcy that we obtain our testimony. The evidence of blessing is that men and women are mourning alone. Could I say that again? The evidence of the blessing of God will be that men and women are mourning alone - accountably mourning before the Lord. Why do I say that? Because Jesus proceeds in the Beatitudes then to

say, 'Blessed are those who mourn.' As soon as we are proceeding forward through, bankruptcy in spirit leads us to mourning in godly fear and with godly sorrow for our sin and its impact, and for lost sonship. This is not someone who is depressed and sad because they have not reached and measured to the exacting standards that God has. This is someone who is in faith and someone who is finding peace. You would ask them, 'What are you doing?' 'I am mourning alone. I am bankrupt in spirit. There is no resource within me that is going to qualify me for today other than the initiative of God toward me. I will only get up and proceed if He initiates toward me in that manner.'

Many of us have risen up from prayer before His right hand of fellowship has actually been extended toward us and before the Holy Spirit has comforted us and ministered to us the fellowship of the sevenfold Spirit of the Lord that belongs to the stars in His right hand. We have risen up from prayer too quickly, presuming that we now have the resource when He has not actually reached out to us yet. When John fell at His feet as a dead man, he did not get up until that right hand reached out and was laid upon him and then began to speak to him and enabled his footsteps for that next season.

Jesus then continues in Matthew 5 verse 4, 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.' We are understanding here that He is not applying separate blessings to different people in different circumstances, so you look and go, 'Well, there is someone who is mourning there, and they really need some comfort. Christ is going to give them a pick-me-up as though the comfort is that they should not be mourning.' Have you often considered it in that manner - that they are comforted in their mourning, so that they then cease to mourn? It is 'Blessed are those who mourn.' You are blessed to mourn alone in response to the blessing of poor in spirit and inheriting the kingdom of God. There is the comfort of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and then the sevenfold Spirit of the Lord being ministered to you from His right hand that comes. It is not then 'Will I cease to mourn for my sin at all?'

This is the issue that they confronted in Malachi's day. Let us turn to Malachi chapter 3.

This repentant mode of mourning that is actually blessed of God was despised by the people in Malachi's day. Turn to Malachi 3. We will read verses 13 and 14 in a moment. Any word defining a culture of obedience, repentance, and faith was despised by them. They saw no profit for themselves in being obedient to that word and in walking before the Lord as those who were poor in spirit and mourning for their sin and self-righteousness. They spoke out in verse 13. They spoke out harshly against the Lord in strong opposition. He said, ' "Your words have been harsh against Me", says the Lord. Yet you say, "What have we spoken against You?" ' So can you see the ease of the Lord being able to speak and to say, 'You have spoken harshly' and then to be able to hear that? The kickback is so strong. 'What have we spoken against You?' Well, 'You have said, "It is useless to serve God. What profit is there for us in that we have kept His ordinance and been obedient and that we have walked as mourners." '

In other words, the outcome of receiving His word and serving the Lord in this manner and being obedient, the profit for them is to walk around as mourners and they despise the blessing of God that belongs to sonship, which is 'Blessed are those who mourn.' This is a despised demeanour. In other words, they are saying, 'Give me another blessing. I do not want to be blessed because I mourn. Bless me in what I am doing. I want to feel good about myself. When I come to church on Sunday, I want to be strengthened in all of the things that I am already thinking and already doing, and I want to be empowered to go and do good things that I am able to define and feel capable for myself. I do not want to come and hear the Lord address me in relationship to my marriage; the way that I am raising my children; the manner in which I am angry and doubting and anxious and being a victim.' Yet, when we are all honest with ourselves, they are all the things that are going on. 'I am a son of God and yet I know my propensity toward all of these things. I kick back and I argue, and I want to come first all of the time. I believe that the truth belongs to my perspective, everybody else needs to know what that is and serve that. That is how I will feel better. I do not want to walk around as a mourner.'

Have we ever felt like (it almost feels relentless) He just keeps addressing our marriages. It will not stop. Thank the Lord that He loves our marriages enough to continue to speak to us in relationship to them. Thank the Lord that He loves our children enough - children who are His - to continue to address that marriage so that the children can be raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They can grow and mature as His sons instead of how we have taken them to ourselves in the same way that we took our marriage to ourselves. This kickback that we sometimes have into 'Addressing me on that again? Can I take a break? Just get a bit of clear air and feel good about myself for a little while?' This is as though the goodness of how I desire to feel is apart from His initiative of love and blessing toward me. This is the natural propensity. This is how they walked around in Malachi's day.

Paul referenced the word of the Lord spoken by the prophet Isaiah in Romans chapter 10 verse 21. He said, 'All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary [elsewhere that is translated 'gainsaying'] people.' All day long He is stretching out His hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people. Gainsaying means 'to gain an advantage by saying'. A person will employ the principle of gainsaying for the purpose of defending their own reputation by correcting the facts in relationship to the illustrations that are being used to communicate a certain point for the purpose of fellowship. The Lord comes and speaks to the people in Malachi's day addressing their culture. They gainsay. They seek to gain an advantage over the messengers of the Lord by saying, 'How? What? When? Prove it to me. Give me an example because I will then be able to take that example apart and demonstrate that you are at fault and that those words that are coming to me are not true.' Have we ever said to one another, 'Give me an example. When have I done it? Give me an example of when I have done it.' Is that what we are going to get into? Then one example then trumps the other example, and trumps the other example, and we go, 'Where is the mind of Christ?' It is nowhere. We are gaining an advantage over and against one another.

We do this to avoid humiliation and shame. However, in reality, it removes the opportunity for fellowship among brethren. I keep saying in our home at the moment, when something is spoken to you, would you please not talk in response to that? Just hear it. No explanations, no justifications, no kickback, no argument, no grunt. Just hear what has been said to you, or else we then get caught in the next element of it. It removes the opportunity for fellowship. If you have spoken harshly against your husband, your wife, your children, your brother, your sister, against the Lord, against the brethren, do we not then desire a brother in a spirit of meekness, then to say, 'You have spoken harshly, and we are able to hear it?' This is instead of going 'When? How? Prove it to me.' In other words, 'Speak harshly again so I can...'

We think it is an advantage that we are gaining, but it is only upholding our own position. In this sense, as we are doing this, we are all trying to get to the truth, but we are all going in the wrong direction.

Job's entire conversation with his friends (and we do not have time to look at this today) was characterised by gainsaying. Each one sought to gain an advantage over the other with each word that was spoken. In all this, the mind of Christ was not made known. It was not made known until the Lord Himself came and spoke in relationship to the matter. He was the only one who could say, 'Where were you in the beginning?' You can understand Job already starts to go, 'Oh, I am in trouble now. I was not there.' He continues on and on. We do not have time to look at that today. We will look at that another day. But can you see, they are all trying to get to the truth and understand what it is? But it is all going in the wrong direction because he is able to counter every statement that is made in relationship to him. He counters it with something that is even more righteous.

When we are gainsaying, we demonstrate that we believe that our own heart is the source of truth. We do not recognise that our own heart is deceitful in the way that it operates. When we are right in our own eyes, we will not be willing to listen and receive admonition from our brethren. In the absence of fellowship, there is no opportunity for obedience. As I said, when Paul

used this term 'gainsaying' in Romans chapter 10 verse 21 and connected it with their disobedience, he was quoting from the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah chapter 65. In several verses on, in Isaiah 65 verse 5, he exposes the heart of the disobedient gainsayer. This is how they view themselves. 'Keep to yourself. Do not come near me, for I am holier than you.' That cuts a bit. Right at the root of what we are saying to one another is 'Keep to yourself. Do not come near to me because I am holier than you are. There is nothing that you can say to me that is going to adjust my rightness and my position on this matter.' When we do this, we respond by saying, 'But I am not'; 'But I am.' 'But what about you?' Being called to do something and 'I am..., I am...'. If you were, you would not be being asked to. If you were not, then you would not be asked to stop doing that. It is pretty straightforward. 'Keep to yourself. Do not come near me, for I am holier than you.'

This is where it has to become bitter in our belly. We need to be bankrupt in spirit and to mourn, because this is how I have spoken to my wife and to my children. I have thought that I have been holier than them, and I have then responded in wrath and doubting, and have in effect said to them, 'Keep to yourself. Do not come near me.' Then I have laid this judgement of holiness and unholiness upon them.

The Laodiceans were also gainsayers. Jesus incredibly came to them as the 'Amen, the Faithful and True Witness'. These are His names, the 'Amen, the Faithful, the True Witness', the Beginning of the creation of God. This brings us all the way back to how He then spoke to Job. He takes Job back to the beginning of the creation of God and says, 'I am the Beginning of the creation of God. The Amen, the Faithful and True Witness.' What Jesus saw and then spoke to revealed what was true and faithful and from the beginning. The Laodiceans had an answer for every true and faithful admonition. Jesus said, 'You say, "I am rich, I have become wealthy and have no need of anything." But you do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.' By the way, that wretchedness and poverty is not bankrupt in spirit. That was the exaltation of themselves in their pride, and He was describing the utter destruction of it. Despite

what they said, they were not having *agape* fellowship. Jesus stood outside the door knocking, desiring that the gainsayers would hear His voice and open the door to Him so that there might be genuine *agape*.

Returning to Malachi as we read down there into verse 16, there were those who feared the Lord in response to the word of the Lord. That became bitter in their bellies. They were bankrupt in spirit, and they mourned with godly sorrow for their sin and its impact upon sonship - both theirs and others. They spoke to one another from this place of testimony there. In this regard, the mode from which we are to speak to one another is as Paul says in Ephesians 5 verse 18, 'Be filled with the Spirit and speak to one another.' That is completely different from 'Keep to yourself and do not come near me.' 'Be filled with the Spirit and speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.... submitting to one another in the fear of God.' This is now beginning to define the demeanour in which we are to relate with one another - '...submitting to one another in the fear of the Lord.' This is what they then were able to do. We can only submit in a spirit of meekness.

Jesus continued in Matthew 5 verse 5, 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.' James spoke of this meekness in James chapter 1 verses 21 and 22. He said, 'Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.' Clearly here meekness belongs to the *doing* of the word. We receive the word in meekness, and we are a doer of the word in meekness. The manner in which we get on with the doing, which is our relating with one another, our service of one another in love, is to be in a spirit of meekness.

To only hear and not proceed in the fellowship of blessing is to deceive yourself. The fruit of this blessing is that we inherit the earth, which is that we are inheriting the land of our sonship in obedience, as those who are doers of the word. Meekness is a quality that firstly belongs to Christ. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10 verse 1, 'Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ...' He went on

to say in verse 3, 'For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare...' Could I really exhort us today that we are being equipped with the weapons of our warfare? 'We walk in the flesh, but we do not war according to the flesh.' The weapons of our warfare that belong to this fellowship of blessing is poor in spirit; is mourning; and is meekness. Can we receive that today? The weapons of your warfare that belong to the blessing of a son of God is to be blessed as those who are poor in spirit, blessed as those who mourn, and blessed as those who are meek. 'For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but [these weapons] are mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds, casting down arguments, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing down every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.' This is how the gainsaying is overcome - through these weapons of warfare.

Meekness is the spirit by which we gladly submit to God without dispute and resistance and whereby we believe the good of another. It is a fruit of the Spirit that operates in contrast to anger, rivalry, and self-assertion. It is not occupied with self at all. Meekness describes who Christ is. We know that He says in Matthew 11, 'Come to Me... take My yoke... and learn from Me... [because what is He like? How does He describe...?] ... for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.' It is with meekness and patience that we are to bear with one another in love, doing everything that we can to 'keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' That is Ephesians 4 verses 2 to 3.

Together with tender mercies, kindness, humility, and patience, we are to put on meekness in order to bear with one another in the midst of complaint and to forgive just as Christ forgave. That is Colossians 3 verses 12 and 13. We are to live in meekness as those who are bankrupt in spirit; mourning for lost sonship; not speaking evil of others - for we ourselves are subject to foolishness, disobedience, deception, serving pleasures and lusts, malice, evil and hate. But for the mercy of God, and the ongoing washing of regeneration and renewing of the

Holy Spirit that is found in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, we would all be deceived and seek our own way. Can we see the necessity of this blessed conduct as sons of God that we are to live in meekness, as those who are bankrupt in spirit, mourning for lost sonship - men mourning alone, women mourning alone, not speaking ill of others for we ourselves are subject to the same foolishness? We are not above it. This is where the context of gainsaying that then says that the root of it is 'I am holier than you. I am above this. I am qualified to speak on a particular matter because I believe that I hold the righteousness of God on it (when in actual fact it is just my own point of view).' We are all subject to this foolishness and deception, but for the mercy of God, we all go that way. In that regard, but for the mercy of God, we are barely making it each day as He extends that toward us as those who are bankrupt in spirit.

Meekness describes the mode through which we recover those who are in opposition. Paul writes to Timothy in 2 Timothy chapter 2 verse 23. He says, 'Avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. The servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, and in meekness correcting those who are in opposition... [This is the weapon of our warfare to correct those who are in opposition; to correct those who are complaining; to secure those who are overtaken in temptation and fault.] ...in meekness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God will grant them repentance.' We minister in weakness because we are men of like passion. We understand that we are as much subject to temptation and fault as anyone.

Come with me now as we finish, to Galatians chapter 6. I have been meditating in these verses throughout the course of this week. 'Brethren, if a man is overtaken in a trespass [or a fault], you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of meekness.' Can you see that when they spoke to one another in the fear of the Lord, in Malachi's day, that this is what they did? They were able to (as they took heed to themselves) recognise where a brother or sister had been overtaken in trespass or fault. As those who were spiritual, with their minds set on the Spirit (be filled with the Spirit) they were then able to speak and to

restore such a one in a spirit of meekness. It then says, '...considering yourself, lest you also be tempted.' I have always thought that that is the Lord saying, 'Be careful if you see someone doing something...' For example, if I see a brother swearing and he is overtaken in this fault of coarse language, if I am spiritual, I am to go in a spirit of meekness and I am to help recover him so that he stops speaking with such coarse language. But I need to consider myself to make sure that I am not tempted to swear while I am trying to recover him. I have often thought that that is the context of this. The real context here is: 'You who are spiritual restore such a one in spirit of meekness, knowing that you are likewise subject to temptation and fault.' We are men of like passions. That does not mean I then meet you going, 'Hey, we all do this. None of us are perfect. Let us move on. Let us believe for the good for one another. You do it. It is okay. I do it sometimes too. Somehow the righteousness of God is proven and resolved because we both fall short of the grace of God. Let us fall short of the grace of God together.' It is clearly not what is being spoken. 'Do we continue in sin because grace abounds [when we sin]? Certainly not.' There is a taking heed to us of understanding that I am likewise subject to this same foolishness, this same deception, disobedience, temptation and fault. 'But for the grace of God' I would go out in judgment. 'But for the grace of God, I am making it today.' I am finding mercy and grace that is new today in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings; the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit is operative; and I am walking in the light of the blood of His seven wounds each day. Therefore, I can bring and offer that fellowship to my brother who is caught and overtaken in a fault - not because I am perfect, but because I am a man of like passions who also needs the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings today if I am to make it today.

He then goes on and says, 'Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. If anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.' This is not describing the demeanour of the one who is overtaken in the fault. This is saying, 'you who are spiritual', take heed to yourself. Do not think

you are something when you are nothing and so deceive yourself.

Could we say here that Job thought he was something? From that self-righteous basis, he answered back every expression of his friends. It was not until the Lord spoke, that he understood and confessed that he was nothing. 'I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.' He is bankrupt in spirit, and he begins to mourn. He then receives the blessing of meekness by which... (what does he then do?) ...he prays for his friends so that they would be recovered because they had been overtaken in that self-righteous fault. Can you see the multiplied ministry that is being committed to us here?

Galatians 6 verse 4: 'Let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load.' When meekness is our mode of ministry, we inherit the earth. The multiplied fruit here, beyond the land of our sonship that we are possessing, is that there will be a great and wonderful harvest of sons of God from the earth. This is the mode of ministry as sons of God that is being committed to us. It will be firstly in our marriages; in our parenting; as members of a family that are members of the body of Christ; how we meet from house to house. The multiplied fruit of this blessing is an inheritance that belongs to the earth, which is a multitude of sons of God that will come into the kingdom. Amen.