**INTERACTIVE TEACHING/LEARNING GUIDE**

**Kingdom Living**

**A Study of the Beatitudes**

**Week 4**

**Session Title: *Happy Are The Humble***

**Focal Passage: Matthew 5:5; Isaiah 66:1-2**

**Central Teaching/Learning Aim:** Learners will understand that blessing comes from relinquishing control of our lives to God.

1. **Hook**
2. **Word Puzzle**

**As class members arrive** provideeach person with the following puzzle sheet and a pencil or pen. They should use the clues to help unscramble the seven hidden words.

Word Puzzle

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full of feeling (10 letters) | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Belief on reasonable grounds (11 letters) | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| With shockingly bad taste (11 letters) | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Like severe criticism (9 letters) | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Adopted in order to deceive (7 letters) | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Little red four-wheelers (6 letters) | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Deficient in spirit and courage (4 letters) | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| UMPT | SU | ESSI | EK |
| OCIO | USLY | ME | MED |
| TRI | VI | VE | PRES |
| OLIC | NS | WA | GO |
| ION | EXPR | AS | ATR |

Key

1. EXPRESSIVE
2. PRESUMPTION
3. ATROCIOUSLY
4. VITRIOLIC
5. ASSUMED
6. WAGONS
7. MEEK

**Debrief.**

**Ask –** How do you feel about the definition of “meek?” Is that truly what the word means? How would you define “meek?”

**State –** In today’s lesson we will be talking about the biblical definition of “meek.”

1. **Optional Method – The Lipizzaner Stallions**

**Location:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEuAm1saO7w>

**Start: 0:06**

**Stop: 1:09**

**Ask –** Are you familiar with the Lipizzaner Stallions? What is so special about these horses? How does a horse originally bred for war end up doing ballet in the court of kings?

**State** – In today’s lesson we will learn that just as the Lipizzaners relinquish control to their human trainers, God desires that we relinquish control to him.

1. **Optional Method – Power Under Authority**

**State** – The Greek word, praus (pronounced prah-oos) has an interesting meaning. It seems that when the Greek army was preparing for war they would go into the mountains to capture the wildest and most unruly horses to become their war horses. After months of cultivation and training some of these horses were discarded because they refused to work and cooperate with their trainers. Others submitted to the training and went on to be the noble war horses of the Greek army.

When a horse passed the training requirements to be a war horse they were described as “praus.” The word actually means “power under authority” or “strength under control.” The horse never ceased to be determined, strong and passionate. However, it had learned to bring its nature under the discipline of the trainer. It gave up being wild, unruly, out of control and rebellious. Instead the horse learned to bring that nature under control.

This word, “praus,” is used in our New Testament and is actually in today’s passage of scripture. In Matthew 5:5, “praus” is translated “meek.”

**Ask –** What do you think of when you hear the word “meek?” Do you think of a Greek war horse? What words you do associate with “meek?”

**Say –** In our scripture passage today Jesus says, “Happy are those who have surrendered control of their lives to God!”

1. **Optional Method – “Roughnecks” Celebrate 100th Anniversary**

**Share** the following excerpt from *The Abilene Reporter-News*:

“Roughnecks” Celebrate 100th Anniversary

Members of the Texas Army National Guard’s 111th Engineer Battalion past and present gathered Sunday at Dyess AFB to celebrate the unit’s 100th anniversary.

“This is a momentous occasion, and it is great to see so many ‘Roughnecks’ here today,” said Army Col. Charles Schoening, commander of the 176th Engineer Brigade at Brownwood. The 176th is the parent unit of the 111th. “This unit, the longest serving engineer battalion in the state, has a storied history, and this is a significant day in the life of all battalion soldiers.”

The 111th was organized June 4, 1917, and drafted into federal service in August of 1917. The unit served with the 36th Infantry Brigade in the Meuse-Argonne Campaign of World War I. During World War II, the battalion supported operations in both the Pacific and European theaters, including operations in Naples-Foggia, Anzio, Rome-Arno, Southern France, Ardennes-Alsace, the Rhineland, and Central Europe.

“Roughneck engineers have served proudly in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Operation Iraqi Freedom and, most recently, in Afghanistan,” said Army Lt. Col. Matthew Calton, 111th commanding officer. “The members of this unit stand ready and willing to fight and win our nation’s wars.”

Dan Carpenter, “’Roughnecks’ Celebrate 100th Anniversary,” *The Abilene Reporter-News*, Abilene, Texas, June 11, 2017.

**Ask –** Is there anything wrong with taking pride in some achievement? Can you think of an instance when pride is wrong? What is the opposite of pride? Is there ever a time when a humble attitude is wrong?

**State –** In today’s passage of scripture Jesus says “Happy are the humble.”

1. **Book**

1. **Write** the following outline on the marker board.

Submit to a Higher Power

1. Happy Are The Meek (Matthew 5:5)
2. The Person Who Receives The Approval of God (Isaiah 66:1-2)
3. **Utilize** the discussion guide to examine the Scripture passages.
4. **Look**
5. **Meekness Q & A**

**Provide** each class member with a copy of the “Meekness Q & A” handout. Work through it with your class.

1. **Optional Method – What The World Says vs. What Jesus Says**

**Provide** each class member with a copy of the “What the World Says vs. What Jesus Says” handout. Work through it with your class.

1. **Took**
2. **Samson**

**State –** We are familiar with the life of Samson that is recorded in the book of Judges. Samson was a powerful man with the heart of a warrior but many times he failed to submit his power to God’s control. Samson desired worldly things and responded by saying “I want it! I deserve it! I can handle it!”

In his book, *Fight*, Craig Groeschel reminds us that we, too are guilty of these kinds of responses. He reminds us that God wants to help us win every godly battle. Groeschel says this is what we should do:

***Turn “I want it” into “I want God.”*** Whatever “it” is for you, as soon as you start to feel that tug, that gravity drawing you toward “I want it,” catch yourself. Resist the pull, capture those thoughts and force them to be obedient to Christ. What you really want is God – his strength, his daily power, his Word living inside you. You want him ordering your steps. You want his Spirit convicting you when you sin, correcting you, leading you in the paths of righteousness. Some people say God is a crutch for the weak. Absolutely! I’m weak. I want God. I need his strength. And so do you.

***Turn “I deserve it” into “I deserve death.”*** Extreme? Maybe. But you know what? This is war. And when the stakes are eternal life – yours and the lives of others – we’re going to do whatever we have to do. We’re unholy men who have sinned against a holy God. The payment for sin is death. We deserve death. This is God’s universe; we just live in it. He doesn’t owe us anything. We owe him everything. What did you make? Nothing. He made everything. For everything you have, you owe him. When we were still sinners God sent his Son to save and forgive us. When we can be humble enough to admit the truth, it should make us bow down before a holy God, saying, “I don’t *have* to serve you. I *want* to serve you.”

***Turn “I can handle it” into “I can’t handle anything without God.”*** If you aren’t a Christian, now is your moment to call on God. How are you doing without him? Ask Christ to forgive you and be your Savior, your Lord. You can’t handle anything without him. If you are a Christian, do you remember what your life was like before you came to Christ? I remember mine. And let me tell you, I simply was not capable of righteousness. The best I could have come up with on my own was shameful before God. I *need* God. Every time you feel that pride creeping back in, that “I can handle this,” remember what we deserve: death. We can’t handle anything without God.

Again, I ask you, what kind of strength do you want to fight with? Your feeble strength? Or God’s unlimited, unmatched power?

You are weak.

God is strong.

His strength is made perfect in your weakness.

Satan loves to make strong men weak.

God loves to make weak men strong.

Will you let him?

Craig Groeschel, *Fight: Winning the Battles that Matter Most*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 60-61.

**State –** You can be like Samson. You can retain control of your life. But if you do, like Samson, your inheritance will be death. Or you can change your attitude. You can put your life under the authority of God. You can become that meek person and be blessed!

**Close in prayer,** asking that God remind us daily to give ourselves to him.

1. **Optional Method – A Contrarian View**

**State –** Non-believers today say, “Happiness comes from power, money, things, and control.” Jesus, on the other hand, preaches a view contrary to that of the world. He says that true happiness comes from a radical change in our attitudes. He says if we are to be truly happy we must submit ourselves to God.

**Ask** God right now to reveal to you those worldly attitudes that are not pleasing to him. Think about those things. Think about how they hurt you and how they hurt others. Decide right now to submit yourself to God. Decide to put your life in his control. Decide to allow him to be the “boss” of your life.

**Close in prayer,** asking God to help you change those things in your life.

1. **Optional Method – A Life that Demands an Explanation**

**State –** When we willingly submit our lives to God the change is evident to everyone. Non-Christian friends will be saying, “What has happened to you? It seems you are out of touch with reality! Your life doesn’t make sense! You used to be all about power and authority and making money. But something has changed.”

**Ask –** Are you willing to live a life that demands explanation or are you satisfied to live a life that conforms to worldly standards?

**Close in prayer,** asking God to help us to live a life that meets with his approval.

1. **Optional Method – *Mere Christianity***

**State –** In his book, *Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis said:

There is no fault which makes a man more unpopular, and no fault which we are more unconscious of in ourselves. And the more we have it ourselves, the more we dislike it in others.

The vice I am talking of is Pride or Self-Conceit: and the virtue opposite to it, in Christian morals, is called Humility. According to Christian teachers, the essential vice, the utmost evil, is Pride. Unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that, are mere fleabites in comparison: it was through Pride that the devil became the devil: Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind.

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1980), 121-22.

**Ask –** How will you “clothe yourself with humility” this week? What specific actions will you take to be on the alert to pride in your life?

**Close in prayer,** asking that God would remind us to “clothe ourselves in humility.”

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Teacher Copy

1. Who will be blessed? (Matthew 5:5)

**[Jesus says that the meek will be blessed.]**

1. How does the world define “meek?” What is the biblical meaning of “meek?”
2. How can someone cultivate meekness in his/her life?
3. How will the meek be blessed? (Matthew 5:5)

**[The meek will inherit the earth.]**

1. What is required for someone to inherit an estate?
2. Why is it significant that the meek will inherit *the earth*?
3. Why is it ridiculous for humans to think about building a house for God? (Isaiah 66:1)

**[God says that Heaven is his throne and the earth his footstool. No building built by humans can contain God.]**

1. What kind of person does God hold in high esteem? (Isaiah 66:2)

**[God gives his approval to those who are humble and contrite in spirit and who tremble at his word.]**

1. What does it mean to be “humble and contrite in spirit?
2. Why would God approve of people who tremble at his word?
3. How do these verses relate to Matthew 5:5?

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Student Copy

1. Who will be blessed? (Matthew 5:5)
2. How does the world define “meek?” What is the biblical meaning of “meek?”
3. How can someone cultivate meekness in his/her life?
4. How will the meek be blessed? (Matthew 5:5)
5. What is required for someone to inherit an estate?
6. Why is it significant that the meek will inherit *the earth*?
7. Why is it ridiculous for humans to think about building a house for God? (Isaiah 66:1)
8. What kind of person does God hold in high esteem? (Isaiah 66:2)
9. What does it mean to be humble and contrite in spirit?
10. Why would God approve of people who tremble at his word?
11. How do these verses relate to Matthew 5:5?

**Meekness Q & A**

Our study today has raised significant questions about how a believer should live. Let’s consider these things.

1. What does it mean to be meek? Write a definition of “meek.”
2. How would you characterize the life of a person who is meek? What do meek people do?
3. What might motivate a person to surrender himself/herself to a higher power? If an individual decides to do this how would his/her life change? List 4 or 5 practices that a meek person might adopt.
4. What is the result of meekness? How should a meek person expect the world to respond to his/her lifestyle? How should a meek person respond?
5. What things in your life hinder you from submitting to God’s authority?

**What the World Says vs. What Jesus Says**

Consider the following questions and record your answers.

**What the World Says**

1. According to the world who will inherit the earth?
2. Describe those who have power in our world today.
3. What phrase would you use to describe the world’s attitude toward meekness?
4. What would the world say about embracing meekness?

**What Jesus Says**

1. Who gets the approval of God, the meek or the proud?
2. What is the first step toward adopting the attitude of meekness?
3. What attitudes and actions characterize the life of a meek individual?
4. What things in your life hinder you from embracing meekness?

**THEE WORD FOR THE WEEK**

Happy are the Hungry

Matthew 5:6 and Psalm 42:1-4

**Monday:** Read Matthew 5:6

Jesus is saying that to be blessed or happy is to hunger and thirst for the right things.

* What do you think it means to hunger for something?
* What do you see most people around you desiring or craving?
* How can it be damaging to hunger for the wrong things?

**Tuesday:** Read Matthew 5:6

Jesus is presenting a path to happiness to the crowd in a way they have never heard.

* Why do you think this was challenging to the crowd that gathered?
* Why would this direction be astonishing to them?

**Wednesday:** Read Matthew 5:6

Our physical lives depend upon food and water; our spiritual lives depend on righteousness.

* Do you believe that the heart of every person was created with a hunger for God?
* What are you hungry for?
* What do you think it means to hunger for righteousness?

**Thursday:** Read Matthew 5:6

Hungering and thirsting is a requirement for coming into God’s kingdom, but also a pattern for us who are already in. When we come to Christ we hunger and thirst for His righteousness (not our own), and after we have come to know Him we hunger and thirst for more of His righteousness.

* What needs to change in your life so there would be more hungering and thirsting for righteousness?
* What does it mean to be filled or to be satisfied?

**Friday:** Read Psalm 42:1-4

Verse one talks about our soul panting or longing for God.

* In what ways, do you long for more of God?
* Is that evident in the way you live your life?
* How does your soul thirst for the living God like mentioned in verse two?

**EXEGETICAL ~ THEOLOGICAL ~ PEDAGOGICAL**

**Note**: In Matthew 5-7 Jesus taught the way of true righteousness (see 5:20 with 7:13-14). True righteousness (how to be “right” before the holy God) is not a man centered, works-generated product of following “religious rules” (5:20). Rather, true righteousness requires a change of attitude and behavior that results from God doing a supernatural work in the character of a true believer. And only those in whom God “works out” His supernatural work of salvation can know what it means to be blessed/happy. With God’s help, we can reflect His righteous character in our thinking and doing so as to enjoy the blessings He intends for His Kingdom subjects.

 Here is Jesus’ party platform, His administrative insights, His Kingdom manifesto. When we accept His rule, we can be 100% sure of our salvation/ deliverance into His Kingdom – not because we can justify ourselves, but because we realize we can’t; not because we are well, but because we realize we are sick; not because we are rich (materially or spiritually), but because we realize we are spiritually impoverished, and, therefore, humbly receive God’s commands and promises.

 Today, in Matthew 5:5 Jesus teaches that the humble Kingdom subject, who demonstrates true meekness toward God, will inherit the Earth. Isaiah helps us understand that the promise anticipates the New Heavens and the New Earth (see 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1). The Day is coming when the Great Reversal will lift up the lowly and cut down the mighty (see 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Luke 1:46-55).

(**Exegetical**: What it meant to the Jewish believers back **THEN**)

**THE INSTRUCTION OF BOTH JESUS AND ISAIAH REGARDING**

**THE REALIZATION OF THE BLESSEDNESS THAT WOULD**

**ACCOMPANY THE GREAT REVERSAL** . . .

**WAS THAT THE HUMBLE WOULD INHERIT THE RENEWED EARTH,**

 (Matthew 5:5 and Isaiah 66:1-2).

1. **The reason the meek/gentle/humble** [toward God] **would be blessed/happy/ completely whole/in a state of shalom, according to King Jesus’ instruction regarding the character of His kingdom subjects** . . . **was because they would inherit the Earth**, (Matthew 5:5).

**Note**: “Meekness is another word for self-effacement. We should not miss the point that in all three of the opening beatitudes the truth is brought out that the follower of Jesus does not aggressively insist on his own rights but displays genuine humility. Meekness is not to be confused with weakness: the meek are not simply submissive because they lack the resources to be anything else. Meekness is quite compatible with great strength and ability as humans measure strength, but whatever strength or weakness the meek person has is accompanied by humility and a genuine dependence on God. True meekness may be a quality of the strong, those who could assert themselves but choose not to do so. The strong who qualify for this blessing are the strong who decline to domineer. Self-assertion is never a Christian virtue; rather, it is Christian to be busy in lowly service and to refuse to engage in the conduct that merely advances one’s personal aims” Morris, L. [*The Gospel according to Matthew*](https://ref.ly/logosres/pntcmatt;ref=Bible.Mt5.5;off=73;ctx=EB$EF$BB$BF_have_$E2$80$9Cgentle$E2$80$9D)._~Meekness_is_another_), 98).

 “The reward of the meek is that *they will inherit the earth* . . . . The verb points to firm possession; clearly there is no thought here of inheriting on the death of a testator or the like. . . . The thought is eschatological; Jesus is looking forward to the coming of the messianic kingdom. In the end it is the meek, not the self-assertive, who will have a place in God’s kingdom. It has often been pointed out that the future in this and the following verses indicates certainty and not simply futurity” (Morris, 98).

1. CLAIM: **King Jesus’ claim regarding those who were meek/gentle/**

**humble** . . . **was that they would be blessed/happy/completely/whole/in a state of shalom**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **“Blessed”****(*Markarious* – truly Happy)** | **“Lucky”****(Chance – Fate)** |
| 1. Depends on God
2. Internal
3. Positional
4. Spiritual
5. Complete fulfillment and satisfaction
6. Most concerned with relationship with God
 | 1. Depends on Circumstances
2. External
3. Conditional
4. Physical
5. Incomplete and unsatisfied
6. Most concerned with relationship with others
 |

1. CHARACTER: **The character trait demonstrated in the lives of Jesus’ Kingdom subjects** . . . **was meekness/gentleness/humility toward God**.

**Note**: “This beatitude alludes to Psalm 37:11: ‘But the meek will inherit the land. . . .” The Psalm is comparing the ‘evil’ and ‘wicked’ with the meek. In fact, Psalm 37:3, 5 seem to define what the psalmist means by the meek. “trust in the Lord and do good. . . . Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him. . . .” The prophet Zephaniah uses the same expressing during a prophetic oracle of judgment: ‘. . .because I will remove from this city those who rejoice in their pride . . . But I will leave within you the meek and humble, who trust in the name of the Lord’ (Zephaniah 3:11-12).

 “In addition, the word *meek* is an important adjective in the bible. It is used to describe Moses in Numbers 12:3, and usually translated as ‘humble.’ Jesus describes himself with the same word in Matthew 11:29, ‘. . . for I am gentle and humble in heart. . . .’ The third Beatitude, then refers to the meekness necessary to trust in God. It also refers to the attitude of God’s servant: the meekness to serve God and do his will above our own” (Rose Publishing. *The Beatitudes*, 4).

 “This was a shocking statement to Jesus’ audience. It was absolutely foreign to their thinking. They knew how to be spiritually proud. They knew how to be self-sufficient. They knew how to play the pious role. They knew religion. They were really good with form. They thought they were the ‘in’ group. They thought they could survive on their own strength and wisdom and might and resources.

 “And when the Messiah arrived they expected Him to usher them into His kingdom and say, ‘I’m here to commend you for your religiosity, for your wonderful spirituality. God has looked down from heaven and He’s very well pleased with you’” (MacArthur, J. *The Beatitudes*, 91).

 “Broken in spirit [see 5:3] focuses on my sinfulness. Meekness [5:5] focuses on God’s holiness.

 “In other words, I am poor in spirit because I am a sinner and meek because God is so holy in comparison. Broken in spirit is negative and results in mourning. Meekness is positive and results in seeking righteousness” (MacArthur, 97).

 “An unbroken colt destroys A broken colt is useful. A gentle breeze cools and soothes, A hurricane kills. Meekness is the opposite of violence and vengeance. The meek man has learned to take joyfully the plundering of his possession, knowing that he has a better possession, even an abiding one, with God” (MacArthur, 100).

1. CAUSE: **The reason Jesus’ Kingdom subjects, being meek/gentle/ humble, would be blessed** . . . **was because they would inherit the Earth**.

**Note**: “The word *inherit* in the Greek means ‘to receive an allotted portion’” (Mac Arthur, 105).

“Old Testament prophets communicated God’s promise to restore the land to Israel. This promise was taken to be limited to the land that God originally promised to Abraham. But in the New Testament, the promise is extended. It is a promised for ‘a new heaven and a new earth’ (Revelation 21:1, 2 Peter 3:13). It is the new heaven and new earth that the meek will inherit” (Rose, 4).

1. CHARGE: **The implied charge to/expectation from Jesus’ Kingdom subjects** . . . **was that they live lives of humility**.”
2. **In contrast (“but”) to YHWH’s sovereignty over all creation, so that no one could build an earthly house that could contain Him, the individual Israelite to whom He looked/paid attention/provided for** . . . **was the humble, the contrite in spirit, the one who honored (“trembled at”) His Word**, (Isaiah 66:1-2).

**Note**: “The broad theme of Isaiah’s final chapter follows on from the vision of the new heaven and new earth. How will the wrath to come be avoided and a confidence attained of enjoyment of the glory to come?

Chapter 66 is best understood by looking first at the shape of the whole. It begins (1–4) and ends (18–24) with the theme of the house of the Lord. In the opening section, Isaiah moves quickly from the house itself (1–2) to contrasting worshippers—those who ‘tremble at my word’ (2), and those who, though they engage in the ritual (3), do not answer when the Lord calls (4). . . .The two internal sections of the chapter deal respectively with these two groups of people: a message of assurance and hope for ‘those who tremble’ at the Lord’s word (5–14), and the Lord’s fiery judgment on the false worshippers (15–17). The Lord’s ‘house’ is, of course, the ‘place’ where he comes to live at the centre of his people’s life. This is his ‘tabernacle’, his tent-dwelling at the heart of his people’s ‘encampment’. As Isaiah teaches, there is but one proper response to the presence of this ‘house’ and its holy Occupant: do we tremble at his word, or do we refuse him when he calls?” Motyer, J. A. [*Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary*](https://ref.ly/logosres/totc23isus;ref=Bible.Is66.1-24;off=33;ctx=and_hope_(66:1$E2$80$9324)._~The_broad_theme_of_I), 452).

 “God is pictured figuratively as sitting on a **throne** (cf. 6:1) with **the earth** as His **footstool** (cf. Acts 7:49). Because of His majesty no one can **build** a **house** for Him to dwell in (1 Kings 8:27); *He* is the Creator. Yet what He values above His inanimate Creation are people who are **humble and contrite** (cf. Isa. 57:15) and who follow His **word**. In one way or another, this has been Isaiah’s message throughout this book. God wants His people to follow the truth He has revealed to them. For Israel that was primarily the Mosaic Covenant. Pointing the people back to the Word of God, Isaiah was indicating that they needed to obey it if they were to enjoy His blessings” Martin, J. A. “[Isaiah](https://ref.ly/logosres/bkc;ref=Bible.Is66.1-2;off=50;ctx=66:1$E2$80$932._~God_is_pictured_figuratively_as_),” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 1120).

1. **YHWH’s claim to the Israelites following their return from exile** . . . **was that Heaven was His throne/seat of honor and the Earth the footstool of His feet**, (1a).
2. **YHWH’s rhetorical question to the Israelites following their return from exile** . . . **asked where they would build a house for** [to contain] **Him and where would His resting place be**, (1b).

**Note**: “Solomon provides us with the perspective we need for these verses. In his dedicatory prayer (1 Kgs 8:12–29) he asked the key question: ‘Will God really dwell on earth?’ (27) The whole context of that question demands the answer ‘Yes’: he affirms the house as a divine dwelling (12), the divine mandate to build the house (14–21), and the Lord’s faithfulness to the Davidic promises regarding the house (22–26). Thus the answer is never in doubt: great as the Lord is, he will come and live in this house among his people. But Isaiah adds his own perspective with the question *Where …?*—indeed, more literally, ‘Wherever …?’ Yes, indeed, the house will be his *resting place* (the word *mĕnûḥâ*, used e.g. in Ruth 1:9, means ‘a home’) where he makes his home among his people—but he is so great (*the earth is my footstool*), so transcendent (1a), earth itself is so tiny (1b) and, besides, he is himself the maker of all (1ef), that human artefacts contribute nothing to him. In a word, the house simply as a building is nothing!” Motyer, 452–453).

1. **YHWH’s declaration to the Israelites following their return from exile** . . . **claimed that His hands had made the heavens and the earth (“all these”) and, in this way, the heavens and the earth came into existence**, (2a).
2. **In contrast (“but”) to YHWH’s sovereignty over all creation (“the heavens and the earth”), the individual Israelite to whom He looked/paid attention/provided for** . . . **was the humble, the contrite in spirit, the one who honored (“trembled at”) His Word**, (2b).

**Note**: “*This is the one I esteem* is a good interpretative rendering, but a more literal translation is ‘But to this one I will look’. The Lord has to ask directions to find the house (1cd; *Where …?, ’ê-zeh*), but he has no problem spotting people (2c; ‘to this one’, *‘el-zeh*). The Lord will graciously, condescendingly, make the miniscule house his home. The *humble* are, socially, those who are at the bottom of life’s heap, dominated by stronger forces and interests; religiously, they are those who willingly take the lowest place before God. *Contrite* (*nĕkēh*): ‘lamed’ (2 Sam. 9:3), or disabled, here used with spiritual significance: one who is aware of the damage wrought by sin, of personal inability to stand upright before God. *Trembles* speaks of a sensitive, concerned longing to please. (The verb *ḥārēd* and its adjective are used in 2 Kgs 4:13 of the caring and painstaking trouble to which the Shunnamite woman went to get everything ready for Elisha, but Ezra 9:4 and 10:3 match this use in Isaiah.) This, then, is what looms large before the Lord’s gaze: our lowliness before him in worship, our self-awareness and our painstaking sensitivity to his *word*” Motyer, 453).

 “You need meekness because you can’t even receive God’s Word without it. The apostle James said, ‘Receive with meekness the engrafted word’ (James 1:21 KJV)” (MacArthur, 106-107).

(**Theological**: What it means for God’s people **ALWAYS**)

**THE AUTHORITATIVE MESSAGE OF KING JESUS REGARDING**

**THE COMING REVERSAL OF FORTUNES** . . .

**PROMISED THE BLESSING OF AN INHERITANCE**

**IN THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH**

**TO THOSE WHO ARE HUMBLE BEFORE THE LORD**

**OF CREATION AND REVELATION**,

(Matthew 5:5; Isaiah 66:1-2).

1. **The humble heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven** . . . **know true blessing/ happiness/joyful wholeness/shalom**, (Matthew 5:5).
2. **The sovereign LORD of all creation** . . . **cannot be confined to a mere human building or controlled by human beings**, (Isaiah 66:1).
3. **The humble and contrite in spirit, who honor the LORD’s Word** . . . **will be looked at/paid attention to/provided for in the Great Reversal (the New Heavens and New Earth)**, (Isaiah 66:2).

(**Pedagogical**: What it means for us **TODAY**)

**HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE YOUR GREAT CREATOR,**

**WHO WILL RENEW THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH**,

(Matthew 5:5; Isaiah 66:1-2).

1. The pilgrim on the pathway to true happiness (blessedness/completeness/ shalom) depends on God, is internal, positional, spiritual, and most concerned with his/her relationship with God.

[This is the pathway to *markarious*, to be fully realized in the Coming Kingdom.]

1. The Pharisees said, “Go BACK” to Legalism vs. Liberty.
2. The Sadducees said, “Go FORWARD” to Liberalism vs. Orthodoxy.
3. The Herodians said, “Go WITH” to Compromise vs. Ministry.
4. The Zealots said, “Go AGAINST” to Revolution vs. Surrender.
5. The Essens said, “Go AWAY” to Isolation vs. Insulation.
6. The Gnostics said, “Go AHEAD” to Sensualism vs. Purity.
7. Jesus said, “Go WITHIN” to the Heart of The Problem.

 [“Happiness is not a goal, but rather the BY-PRODUCT of Kingdom living.”]

1. Enjoy the Coming Kingdom in a state of humility, (Matthew 5:5).
2. CLAIM: Kingdom subjects are blessed, happy, whole, in shalom.
3. CHARACTER: Happy Kingdom subjects are humble – trembling and receptive before their God and King.
4. CAUSE: Inheritance in the New Heavens and New Earth is granted only to the humble. (see 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1ff).
5. CHARGE: Enjoy the Kingdom of Heaven in a state of humility.
6. Humble yourself before your great Creator, (Isaiah 66:1-2).
7. The LORD who made the heavens and the earth cannot be confined to a mere human building, (1).

[You don’t have control of God – with all your spirituality. He has control over you to curse you or bless you.]

1. Only the humble and contrite in spirit, who honor the LORD’s Word will inherit the New Creation in the Great Reversal, (2).

[Compare 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Luke 1:46-55.]

1. **HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE YOUR GREAT CREATOR**.