February 24, 2012
Sligo e-weekend Newsletter
"It's Cool to be Meek!"

Dear Lexie,

Adrian Barnett back in 1999 wrote an article mocking the sentiments expressed Matthew 5:5, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth," A couple paragraphs read:

"In a surprise announcement this morning, it was revealed that the Meek have inherited the Earth. The actual change of ownership itself happened three weeks ago, but the spokesperson for the Meek was too shy to contact the press. After much polite cajoling from fellow Meek Persons, the fulfilment of this ancient prophecy has finally come to pass.

"A representative for the Meek gave us these comments - "As you know, the Earth was promised to us almost 2000 years ago by Jesus Christ himself, during his famous Sermon on the Mount. We have been Blessed for all that time, which was quite nice, but simply had to wait for the momentous event itself. The Earth and all it contains now belongs to us. By Divine Command, we Meek have absolute domination over the planet. We hope you don't mind". Blushing, she continued, "I know it's a bit of a big change, but it's really out of our hands. It's all a bit embarrassing actually."

...(read more below)
Today the word meek bears negative connotations. Meekness is often coupled with spinelessness, weakness, ineffectiveness. A prospective candidate for a job might not fare well at the job interview if meekness is one of the qualities that he or she lists as having. In fact, they might not even get to the interview because of 'meekness.' Some employers are impressed with words such as aggressive, persuasive, energetic, go-getter. Yet Jesus is quite clear about the importance and perpetuity of meekness.

It is doubtful that Jesus had in mind the kind of meekness that Barnett described. Manso is the word in Spanish that corresponds with meekness in the Beatitudes. In some Spanish-speaking countries horse-riding is a popular tourist activity. If as you sat astride your horse as a sophisticated American tourist, your guide saw a bit of fear and apprehension in your face, a word he might use is 'manso.' By saying 'manso' they are telling you that you do not need to worry because the horse is manso - it will do what you tell it to do or will go as you direct.

So, if the word 'manso' is anything to go by, meekness in its highest meaning is doing what God tells us to do or going as He directs. Matthew Henry, notable Bible commentator, says, "The meek are those who quietly submit themselves before God, to His Word, to His rod, who follow His directions and comply with His designs, and are gentle toward men"

Adrian Barnett's portrayal of the meek sees them as weak and helpless and apologetic but the meek in God's eyes is anything but. God-given meekness must stand up for God-given rights. Jesus was no less meek when He drove the money changers from the temple than when He said from the Cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Moses, who is described in the Bible as the meekest of men, did not take a vacation from being meek when he saw the Israelites dancing before the golden calf and broke the stone tablets in disgust on which the commandments were written.

In an aggressive and hostile society God needs meek people, gentle in spirit, but willing to respond to the leading of His Spirit; people who are calm but unwilling to yield to the pressures of keeping up appearances or making an impression; people who are self-controlled but ever ready to 'fight' for those things for which God Himself 'fights'. It is such people who will make a positive difference in the world.

Meekness may seem woefully out of place in our present world but Jesus has assured us of its triumph: It is cool to be meek! "The meek shall possess the land, and delight themselves in abundant prosperity." Psalm 37:11.

Don W McFarlane
UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

March 3/Communion
Pr. Charles A. Tapp

March 10
Pr. Charles A. Tapp

Worship Services every Saturday:
First Service - 8:45am
Sabbath School - 10:00am
Sabbath Celebration - 11:15am

Please consider giving a gift to Sligo.
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You are cordially invited to be part of a day of inspiring Russian music, fellowship and prayer.

Saturday, February 25, 2012, 8:45 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.
Sabbath Worship Service, featuring a soloist from Russia, Elena Rudoy & Dr. Mikhail Kulakov's message "When Life is Worth Living"

Saturday, February 25, 2012, 4 p.m.
Musical concert, featuring a soloist from Russia, Elena Rudoy

For more information about these events, please visit the website <www.russianbible.org> or contact Dr. Kulakov at 301-576-0108 or <mkulakov@wau.edu>
We hope you found this week's e-weekend newsletter helpful. If there is anything else you would like to see included, we appreciate your feedback. Just email us to sligo@sligochurch.org. We will continue to send this out on a weekly basis. Remember, you may choose to unsubscribe for any reason at any time, though, we hope you won't!

May God continue to richly bless you!