**HOLY SAVIOUR, BITTERNE BIBLE STUDY – WEEK BEGINNING MAY 24th (Beatitudes 3)**

*We are continuing our series of studies on the Beatitudes which is the theme homegroup leaders settled on for this term. The Beatitudes teach us about Christian character, something which the current crisis may well be helping to shape!* ***Jot down your thoughts about the questions in the spaces provided*** *–* ***and it would be really good to share them with others.*** *Phone, Skype, email some members of your homegroup or a friend and/or email me your thoughts (* brianparfitt@btinternet.com *).* ***Brian Parfitt***

Where would you put yourself on a scale in between ‘pushy’ and ‘pushover’? Which is more likely to be seen as successful by the media and people around you?

**This week’s Beatitude is Matthew 5.5. Translations of it vary as they struggle to express the original Greek. ‘Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth,’ say the New International and Revised Standard Versions. ‘Happy are those who are humble; they will receive what God has promised!’ says the Good News Bible. ‘Blessed are the gentle, they shall have the earth for their possession,’ says the Revised English Bible. Being ‘gentle’, ‘humble’ or ‘meek’ contrasts with ‘pushy’, ‘proud’, or ‘grasping’. The Greek word translated as gentle, humble or meek does not mean ‘pushover’ however. It can be used of a horse that has been trained and speaks of someone humble and dependent on God, obedient to him and patient and gentle in their relationships with others.**

**To explore what it means to be humble/gentle/meek we are going to look at some passages from the Old and New Testament. *(If it’s helpful you might look at them over a few days, one at a time, rather than all at once.)***

**Jesus’ words echo those found in several places in Psalm 37. For the Jewish people possessing their share of the Promised Land was important – something which could be threatened by injustice and oppression. The Psalm contrasts the destiny of the wicked and the humble. Read Psalm 37.7-11, *(If you have time read verses 22, 29, 34, which also echo Jesus’ Beatitude, or the whole Psalm.)***

Imagine you have been a refugee but have now been granted citizenship of a good country – what would be the benefits and blessings which flow from that? In what ways might that be reflected in Jesus’ promise that ‘the meek shall inherit the earth’? What positive things flow from our dependence on God?

**Read Matthew 11.28-30 and 12.15-21 where Jesus is described as gentle and humble.**

 Can you think of ways in which Jesus showed gentleness and humility in the way he dealt with the people he met? How can Jesus help us reflect his character?

**Look at Philippians 2.1-11 which calls us to reflect Jesus’ humility.**

How is Jesus’ humility pictured in verses 6-11? How was that humility rewarded?

In what ways are we encouraged in verses 1-5 to reflect that humility in our relationships with other people?

How might that look in your relationships at work, in church life, in the family or friendships?

Reflect on what you have discovered from ***each of the passages*** we have looked at. How do they help you understand this Beatitude. How can humility/gentleness/meekness shape our relationship with God and our relationship with others? How can we reflect this in our dealings with those under pressure at the moment and how we feel about our own status and circumstances?