

# Biblical Gentleness

*Gal.5:16-25*

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b. It IS "...having mean (lowly) thoughts of one's self, in walking humbly with God, acknowledging every favour, being thankful for every blessing and depending on His grace and in behaving with modesty and humility among men." John Gill on Gal.5:23

C. Biblical Meekness IS **an inwrought grace of the soul**, that enables the believer to **accept God's dealing with him/her as being good**, without fighting against God. It is a desire to manifest this acceptance of God's sovereignty in his/her life by **responding in this Christ-like manner to all men**, even wicked men.

## III. The Example of Our Lord Jesus Christ

- A. In His talking and teaching His 11 faithful disciples as they walked from the upper room to the Garden of Gethsemane, Jn.14-16. *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."* Jn.14:1-3
- B. In His agonizing prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, when His soul was exceedingly sorrowful and an angel had come to strengthen Him so He could continue in prayer more earnestly – *"Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours be done."* Lk.22:42
- C. In His prayer recorded in John 17. 17:9 *"I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours."* 17:20, 21 *"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me."*
- D. In His reply to Pilate's indignant questions - *"...Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You? Jesus answered, 'You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.'..."* Jn.20:10b-11b

## IV. Applications

- A. May the Holy Spirit enable believers to think correctly and clearly about "meekness" and "gentleness", that is a fruit of the Spirit and which they are to manifest toward God and toward mankind.
- B. Phil.2:5-8; Heb.12:2, 3

**Introduction:** When I say the word "gentleness" what image comes to mind? When I say the word "meekness" what image comes to your mind? Would you (especially you men) be insulted if someone were to refer to you as being "a gentle and meek" person?

## I. WHY should such a consideration (gentleness and meekness) be important to every true believer in Christ Jesus?

- A. Because *gentle* and *meek* is what the Lord Jesus was when He walked upon the face of this earth
1. This is what Christ Jesus proclaimed Himself to be – Matt.11:29 *Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*
  2. This is what the Holy Spirit declared the Lord Jesus to be, through the inspired writing of the Apostle Paul in 2 Cor.10:1 *Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ ...*
- B. Because gentleness and meekness is part of that image of Christ to which every true believer in Christ is being conformed – Rom.8:29 *"For whom He foreknew, these He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son..."*
- C. Because gentleness and meekness is the fruit of the Spirit that God, the Holy Spirit, has put into every believer, distinguishing them from this wicked world and manifesting God's work of sovereign, saving grace in them – Gal.5:22, 23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is not law.*
- D. Because of the blessedness that comes from having and manifesting gentleness and meekness
1. In the N.T. – Matt.5:5 *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*
  2. In the O.T.
    - o Ps.22:26 *The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him will praise the LORD...*

- Ps.25:9 *The humble He guides in justice, and the humble He teaches His way,* See also Ps.147:6 and Isa.29:19.
  - Ps.37:11 *But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*
- E. Because gentle and meek is what godly wives are commanded and instructed to adorn themselves with – I Pet.3:4 *rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*
- F. Because gentleness and meekness is how spiritual believers are to endeavor to restore their brethren, who are overtaken in any trespass – Gal.6:1 *Brethren, if any man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*
- G. Because it is what the elect of God are commanded to put on – Col.3:12 *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;*
- H. Because it is what the Apostle Paul commanded Timothy to do. It is what every minister is commanded to put on (have in them and manifest for all to see) – I Tim.6:11 *But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.*
- I. Because it is a secondary characteristic of the wisdom that is from above – Jas.3:17 *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.*
- J. Because it is what Paul told (commanded) Titus to remind believers to be – Titus 3:1, 2 *Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.*

## II. WHAT IS Biblical ‘gentleness’, ‘meekness’ ?

- A. Here is the difficulty: the Greek word *praotes* ( ), is not fully and precisely expressed in English.
1. Notice that the same Greek word that is translated “gentle” in Matt.11:29, is translated “meekness” in 2 Cor.10:1.
  2. In 2 Cor.10:1, ‘meekness’ and ‘gentleness’ are translated from 2 separate Greek words. The first (meekness) has to do with the heart and mind (the disposition of being meek), while the 2<sup>nd</sup> (gentleness) has more to do with outward manifested actions (the outward manifestation of that inward disposition of meekness).

- In other words, the outward actions of gentleness (mild, kind, fair and moderate), comes from the inward mind and heart of meekness (being mild, kind, fair and moderate). cf. Phil.2:13
- B. The worldly concept of “meekness” differs from the Biblical teaching of “meekness”.
1. Worldly Meekness => dictionary: “1) patient and mild; not inclined to anger or resentment, 2) a) tamely submissive; easily imposed on, b) too submissive; spineless”
    - a. The “meekness” manifested by the Lord Jesus and that is commended (commanded) to the believer IS NOT “too submissive, NOR spineless! “Described negatively, meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest; IT IS equanimity of spirit (dictionary: ‘the quality of remaining calm and undisturbed; evenness of mind or temper; composure’) that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all.” --from Vine’s Expository Dictionary
    - b. Furthermore, Biblical Meekness IS a part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22, 23). In other words, this Biblical Meekness IS NOT naturally in natural, fallen mankind. It is implanted by the Holy Spirit into a sinner at the time of their regeneration. Having and being able to manifest Biblical Meekness, is the result of being regenerated; it is a gift from God.
  2. Biblical Meekness is much more than being patient, mild, kind & moderate in our dealings with others.
    - a. It IS “...it is an inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly towards God. It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealing with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting; it is closely linked with the word *tapeinophrosune*(a) [humility], and follows directly upon it, Eph.4:2; Col.3:12;...it is only the humble heart which is also the meek, and which, as such, does not fight against God and more or less struggle and contend with Him. This meekness, however, being first of all a meekness before God, is also such in the face of men, even of evil men, out of a sense that these, with the insults and injuries which they inflict, are permitted and employed by Him for the chastening and purifying of His elect.” (Trench, Syn)