

"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth."
Matthew 5:5

Meekness is not Weakness

Beatitudes – Blessed are the Meek – Matthew 5:5

"Happiness is different from pleasure. Happiness has something to do with struggling and enduring and accomplishing." - George Sheehan

Interesting thought. Happiness comes from working hard, working hard at seeing our spiritual poverty, at mourning over our sin, and at being meek.

Of course, our perspective of meekness is much different than Christ's perspective. We see meekness as a mouse that runs at the scent of danger and is easily disposed of when it has become a pest. Even the dictionary defines meekness as "one without strength or courage". Meekness is seen as weakness by those who are strong-willed and risk takers.

Why does our society frown so much at meekness?

How would you define meekness?

Meekness is too often seen as a character flaw rather than a personal strength, but meekness is exalted throughout Scripture.

- Numbers 12:3 - Moses is called meek above all men.
- Psalms 22:26 – The meek will be provided for.
- Psalms 25:9 – The meek will receive guidance from God.
- Psalms 76:9 – The meek will be saved by God.
- Isaiah 29:19 – The meek will increase in their joy for God.
- Ephesians 4:1 – We are called as believers to be meek.
- Titus 3:2 - again, called to be meek.

There are others, but it is evident that Jesus is not the first and only one to call us to meekness. I know it is a hard concept for us to swallow, but even those in hearing distance of Jesus struggled with the idea of meekness. The Jews were looking for a leader who would stand up and take charge. In their minds the meek were not the ones who should inherit the earth, but the outspoken, strong leader should.

Sounds like our society. We often look to the leaders who are strong and can get things done to take charge and lead us. We think strength equals success, but Jesus thought differently.

Why do we look to strong, powerful leaders to take charge?

“For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously.”
1 Peter 2:21-23

Most of us have heard the classic definition of meekness – power under control. Peter gives us a glimpse into meekness when he describes what took place at the trials of Jesus, and remember that Peter was there. In 1 Peter 2:21-24 we see that Jesus was being challenged and mocked even though He committed no sin. This is the same Jesus who spoke and the waters were still or broke bread and fed 5,000. The same Jesus commanded demons to depart and the dead to live. Jesus himself showed Peter his meekness or power under control when He told Peter in Matthew 26:53 that He could call down twelve legions of angels to defend Himself.

The Greeks understood meekness to mean mild, gentle, or soft, like a soothing medicine, a gentle breeze, or a trained horse. Each of these things has great and sometimes destructive power when not under control. A medicine can kill a man, a wind can level a house, and a horse can throw a rider to his death.

With this in mind, what are some other examples of meekness?

Power under control. We can easily develop a respect for the meek.

Notice why the meek are happy; they will inherit the earth. This is yet another statement that defies what we consider to be true.

Psalm 37:11 gives us an Old Testament understanding of meekness, and is considered by some to be the Old Testament version of Jesus' words.

“But the meek will inherit the land and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity.”

Have you ever lost control of your temper? Have you ever went shopping and became a victim of impulse buying? Have you ever gone grocery shopping and brought back more than you went for? Have you ever got excited about an opportunity and jumped into it without researching it?

Pick one of the above questions and consider the answer. Did you have regrets? Why?

Now think again about those questions and consider what would happen if you did not give in to the urges. I would think in all the cases you would have been happier. Now carry these questions through life. A person that continues to lose his anger and blow up at friends and family will in the end have no friends or family. The person who gives in to impulsive buying may have lots of stuff, but will also have lots of debt, or is a slave to materialism. Maybe it is the person who jumped into too many opportunities and is now over-stretched and burned out.

These people are not happy and what they “inherit,” I would gladly stay away from.

*“For the Lord takes
delight in his people;
He crowns the
humble with
salvation.”
Psalm 149:4*

The meek have godly happiness here on earth because they practice control and therefore are able to inherit the earth, but it does not stop here.

Only the meek can be saved, therefore as children of God, they inherit the new earth. Psalm 149:4 explains that the Lord will give salvation to the meek.

There are several questions to ask ourselves in seeking to be meek.

1. Are you Spirit-controlled? Galatians 5:22-23, Philippians 4:8
2. How do you respond to God's Word? John 15:10
3. Do you seek peace? 1 Thessalonians 5:13
4. Do you accept correction? 2 Timothy 3:16
5. Are you strong-willed and controlling? 2 Timothy 2:24-25

We are called upon to be meek, to practice Spirit-control. Paul warns the believers at Philippi, in chapter 4 and verses 5-7, to practice meekness or power under control because it will keep us from worry and allow God's peace to guard our hearts and minds.

It does make sense. Those who are meek will not jump ahead or out of turn, they will not practice sporadic control, but they will quietly and gently walk through life, careful to measure all things and in the end experience happiness and a huge inheritance.

Meekness is strength.

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?
