

# Meekness

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[0:00] You just can't do that, but what a shot in the arm it was for everybody there. And so I'm thankful for those of you who helped in that regard to get us there and to just support in that way.

For those of you who prayed and were diligent and fervent in that, that means something. And God knows, but those moments are worth having in your life, and they're something you can remember. They're worth hanging on to. And for some, they're life-changing. For some, it's what gets them over the edge to go for God, to follow the Lord with their life.

So that's a prayer of mine. My prayer was the whole time that God would speak to the hearts of my kids, of every teen that was there, that they'd not just experience the place, but that they'd hear the voice of God.

And that's something I'll be talking about later, so that's enough of that. Brother Eric Peterson, come on up. Well, hopefully I got that right.

[1:16] All right. Good morning. Turn in your Bibles, if you would, to Galatians chapter 5. Galatians chapter 5.

We're going to start at verse 22. Galatians 5, 22. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Against such there is no law. Lord God, I thank you for the privilege to be here this morning. I ask that you would cover me with the blood.

You would fill me with your Holy Spirit. That you would be thou magnified this morning. Lord, these are your people. Feed them with your word. Feed them with your words.

Help me not to be a hindrance to any of this morning. I pray these things in the precious Savior's name. Amen and amen. If ever there was a word that was misunderstood, meekness just may be it.

[2:51] The thought that probably first comes to most people's mind when they hear the word meekness is weakness. It doesn't seem to have a good connotation in most people's minds.

And it's pretty clear why meekness has come to be associated with meekness when you pick up a modern English dictionary or thesaurus. Here are the synonyms listed in the Reader's Digest Oxford Complete Word Finder.

Tame, timid, mild, bland, unambitious, retiring, weak, docile, acquiescent, repressed, suppressed, spiritless, broken, and wimpish.

These are probably not the characteristics that today's business world is looking for in its next CEO. And that's probably not what you ladies were looking for in your ideal husband either.

Okay, now here's something that you're probably rarely going to hear from this pulpit. And that is that meekness in the Greek actually means the wild horse that has become obedient to the bitten bridle.

[4:06] Thus the modern theologian has defined the word as strength under control, which is a bunch of nonsense actually. And we'll see that soon enough.

And I'll confess that if you had asked me some time ago to define that word, that would have been the definition that I would have given you as well. I remember a chapel sermon I heard in college in about 1985 or 1986 on the Beatitudes.

And that was the definition that the speaker gave at that time, strength under control, and it stuck with me for years. William Barclay, who was a Scottish minister, professor of divinity and biblical criticism, and author of a popular set of Bible commentaries, And his comments on Galatians 5.22 said, Meekness is the most untranslatable of words in the New Testament.

Okay, so what then is meekness? Dr. Luckman would say that we correct the Greek with the English. So, in looking at Noah Webster's dictionary, we find meekness defined as mild of temper, gentle, not easily provoked or irritated, given to forbearance under injuries, humble in an evangelical sense, submissive to the divine will, without murmuring or peevishness, not apt to complain of divine dispensations, ready to yield rather than cause trouble.

Now, if we look back at the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5, we can see that the fruits are separated into three bunches of three. The first three fruits, love, joy, and peace, these fruits are inward in nature.

[6:06] The second three, long-suffering, gentleness, and goodness, these would be outward in nature. These are acts, outward acts towards men, lost and saved.

And the third bunch, faith, meek, and temperance, these are Godward. These three deal with the relationships that the believer has to the Lord and our response to his will for our lives.

We should receive instructions from the Lord meekly and submissively, not in the spirit of Simon Peter, who used to say, not so, Lord, far be it from me, Lord, you'll never wash my feet, Lord, and so on.

Our correct response ought to be, speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. Psalm 25, 8 and 9 says, Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way. So we see here that the Lord promises to guide and teach a particular kind of person in a particular way.

[7:22] His promise is to instruct a meek Christian in his way. God will do the teaching because he is good, and it must be his way because his way is the way, the truth, and the life.

So I want to propose to you this morning a definition on meekness, and then I'd like to show you the demonstration of it in the lives of three different men in the scripture.

Meekness, then, is the patient, humble, uncomplaining submission to the divine will. It would be the patient, humble, uncomplaining submission to the divine will.

The first person I want to look at this morning is Moses. Because in Moses we have quite a contradiction, because in him we have one of the most wrathful men in the Bible.

Killing, smiting, destroying, burning with anger, smashing the stone tablets at the front of Mount Sinai. In Exodus 32, 20, it says, And he took the calf which they had made and burnt it in the fire and ground it to powder and strad it upon the water, made the children of Israel to drink of it.

[8:39] There's nothing mousy or meek about Moses. And we read in Numbers 12, 3, Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.

So here's a man with a hot temper. He was also considered the meekest man on the earth at that time. It was Moses who was Israel's lawgiver.

He was their judge. He was the one God chose to lead Israel out of the iron furnace of Egypt into the promised land. And although he was, in fact, very reluctant to do so, he did do it.

There are going to be times in life when God asks us to do something we don't want to do or we don't think we're qualified to do. We need to do it anyways.

Moses spent 40 years battling a recalcitrant and disappointing people who fought him every step of the way and who murmured unceasingly, yet he humbly submitted to the will of God and showed great meekness in the midst of this constant opposition and complaining.

[9:52] And recalcitrant, by the way, means obstinately defiant of authority or restraint. And there's probably no better word to define the children of Israel in the wilderness than recalcitrant.

They were a stubborn, stiff-necked, complaining, murmuring people. Now, as mentioned earlier, Moses was possessed with a fierce temper.

And it was this temper that probably led to his greatest demonstration of meekness in his life. So turn now, if you will, to Numbers chapter 20. Numbers 20. Numbers 20.

We'll start at verse 1. Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month.

And the people abode in Kadesh. And Miriam died there and was buried there. And there was no water for the congregation. And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against

Aaron.

[11:10] And the people chode with Moses and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord. Why have you brought us up the congregation of the Lord into this wilderness that we and our cattle should die there?

And wherefore have you made us to come up out of Egypt to bring us into this evil place that is no place of seed or of figs or of vines or of pomegranates, neither is there any water to drink.

And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation and fell upon their faces. And the glory of the Lord appeared unto them. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod and gather thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes.

And it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock. So thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the Lord as he commanded them.

And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of the rock. And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice, and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.

[12:37] And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believe me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and he was sanctified in them. In this passage, you see the enormous consequence Moses suffered for not sanctifying the Lord in the eyes of the children of Israel.

I can't imagine the disappointment that Moses must have felt in not being able to enter the promised land himself.

He endured so much, so much. In a rare moment of weakness, his temper betrayed him. God said, in effect, now look Moses, in order to teach the whole world how much lost sin can bring, I'm not going to let you enter into the land.

The people will go in, but you're not going in. And in response to that, Moses didn't curse God in furious protest. He didn't bitterly murmur and complain.

[13:57] He quietly, and sadly, accepted God's decision. That's meekness. Meekness for a child of God means accepting uncomplainingly what comes, knowing that it comes from the hand of God who orders all things.

What he sends, we accept in faith, even if it hurts, knowing that it is for our and others' goods.

Second person I want to look at is David.

David was the man God took from the sheepfold, put upon a throne. He was the sweet psalmist of Israel, a man of God's own heart.

And we don't usually equate him with meekness, but there was and is an event from his life that demonstrated a tremendous amount of uncomplaining submission to the will of God.

So if you will, turn now to 1 Chronicles 17. 1 Chronicles 17. 1 Chronicles 17.

[15:18] Start at verse 1. Now it came to pass as David sat in his house that David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in a house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord remaineth under curtains.

And Nathan said unto David, Do all that is in thine heart, for God is with thee. And it came to pass the same night that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, Go, tell David my servant.

Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me a house to dwell in. For I have not dwelt in a house since the days that I brought up Israel unto this day, but have gone from tent to tent, from tabernacle to another.

Wheresoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why have you not built me a house of cedars?

Now move ahead to verse 15. According to all these words and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

[16:29] And David the king came and sat before the Lord and said, Who am I, O Lord? And what is mine house that thou hast brought me hitherto?

And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God, for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God.

What can David speak more to thee for the honor of thy servant? For thou knowest thy servant. O Lord, for thy servant's sake and according to thine own heart hast thou done all this greatness in making known all these great things.

O Lord, there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel whom God went to redeem to be his own people to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness by driving out nations from before thy people whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt.

For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people forever and thou, Lord, becamest their God. Therefore now, Lord, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant and concerning his house be established forever and do as thou hast said.

[17:53] Now, whereas Moses acted out of a temporary lapse of self-control, here David is acting out of the best of intentions and seeking to build a temple for the Lord.

and the Lord says, no, David, he's been a man of war, a man who shed much blood, so I'm not going to have you build my temple. I'm going to have your son build it instead. And in David's response, we don't see a hint of complaining or resistance to God's direction, but rather a complete yieldedness to the will of God.

In fact, David is so compliant that he actually begins to make provision for the construction of the temple himself. Again, in Moses, we see a response to something where he acted out against the Lord.

And in David, we see meekness demonstrated in someone whose best intentions were to do something that was to honor the Lord. So there may be times in our life when God puts a halt to our plans, even though there's nothing very evidently wrong with him.

He may delay our plans to a later date or he may have someone else in mind who he intends to use to carry out those plans. But we're to submit our very best plans and intentions to the will of God.

[19:09] That's meekness. The last person I want to look at this morning is our Savior, Jesus Christ. Turn now to Mark chapter 14.

Mark 14. And we'll start in verse 32. And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane.

And he saith to his disciples, sit ye here while I shall pray. And he taketh with them Peter and James and John and began to be sore amazed and to be very heavy.

And saith unto them, my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death. Tarry ye here and watch. And he went forward a little and fell on the ground and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee. Take away this cup from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt.

[20:34] And he cometh and findeth them sleeping and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? Coudest thou not watch one hour? Watch ye and pray lest ye enter into temptation.

The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. And again he went away and prayed and spake the same words. And when he returned, he found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. Neither wist they what to answer him. And he cometh a third time and saith unto them, sleep on now, take your rest. This is enough. The hour has come.

Behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go. Lo, he that betrays me is a hand. One of the greatest demonstrations of meekness in the Bible, if not the greatest, is from the one who said, take my yoke upon you and learn from me.

For I am meek and lowly in heart. You shall find rest into your souls. My yoke is easy and my burden is light. Jesus Christ's uncomplaining submission to the will of the Father to endure death on the cross that he did on our behalf.

[21:57] Something that's nearly incomprehensible. I want to look at Isaiah chapter 53. Isaiah 53.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? That he shall grow up before him as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground.

He hath no form nor comeliness and we shall see him. There is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and we hid, as it were, our faces from him.

He was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed.

[23:19] All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted yet he opened not his mouth.

He's brought his lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shears is dumb so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment and who shall declare his generation for he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

And he made his grave with the wicked and were the rich in his death because he had done no violence neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him.

He hath put him to grief when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin he shall see his seed he shall prolong his days and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many for he shall bear their iniquities.

[24:35] Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great and he shall divide the spoil with the strong because he hath poured out his soul into death and he was numbered with the transgressors and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

Our Savior's submission to the will of God to the will of the Father costs him all. Meekness the patient humble uncomplaining submission to the divine will of God will cost us all as well.

Luke 9 23 24 says and he said to them all if any man will come after me let him deny himself take up his cross daily and follow me for whosoever will save his life to lose it but whosoever will lose his life for my sake the same shall save it.

Those who are meek that is those who are prepared to forego their rights to this world and in this world if that's what God requires of them will have much to inherit in the life to come.

Psalms 37 11 says but the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. As Christians our inheritance won't be in this earth we have instead an infinitely rich future awaiting us in heaven.

[26:21] Let me just conclude with this I will not take that bitter thrust which rent my heart today as coming from an earthly soul though it was meant that way but I will look beyond the tool because my life is planned I take the cup my father gives I take it from his hand he knows and even thus allows these little things that irk I trust his wisdom and his love let patience have her work though human means have brought the sting I firmly take this stand my loving father holds the cup I take it from his hand now those who watch may wonder why these things do not disturb I look right past the instrument and see my lord superb the trials which would lay me low must pass through his command he holds the outstretched cup to me

I take it from his hand thank you a little quick thank you them now we love you so