

MEEKNESS ISN'T WEAKNESS

Devotional #9



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Sermon Series: " We Grow, We Mature, We Produce!
Sermon Subject: "Meekness Isn't Weakness"

Foundational Scriptures:

Galatians 5:22-23 ESV

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Ephesians 5:17-21 ESV

¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

2 Peter 3:18 ESV

¹⁸ But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Matthew 7:15-20 ESV

¹⁵ "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

Helpful Hints to manage this devotional:

- Set aside 1 hour each day for time with God and his word.
- **Suggestion:** 30 minutes, possibly in the morning, 30 minutes in the evening.
- Read and write daily at your pace so that by the weekend, you have completed the week's devotional. The design is that you don't have to find a starting point to study; just do it. Get an accountability partner to read and study the devotional.

Dean Stroud, editor of "Preaching in Hitler's Shadow" Sermons of Resistance in the Third Reich, chronicles the messages of resistance against Hitler and his Nazi regime. He raises questions as to what was being said at a time when resistance guaranteed death. What did German pastors preach on Sunday when their lives were in jeopardy? What should the church have done? Should the church pastors take a "meek" or tepid approach to save their lives, or do they stand on the word and put their lives on the line? Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Niemöller, and Rudolph Bultman's sermons on resistance remind us that meek doesn't mean weak!

"The meek enjoy almost perpetual Sabbath." **-Matthew Henry**

The 8th fruit of the Spirit is meekness or gentleness, not to be mixed with soft or weak. Meekness can be seen as a flaw that causes one to overcorrect and not appear weak. The person that embodies meekness doesn't lack a spine or is subservient and a sucker but chooses not to retaliate, which takes more strength. Meek is the person who has mastered himself.

"Nothing is more powerful than humility. As water extinguishes fire, a mind inflated by anger is subdued by humility." - **Saint John Chrysostom**

A. Meekness: What is It?

"Meekness, the chief grace and perfection of the soul." **-Lord Acton**

Gentleness and meekness are used synonymously in many cases; it is a strong hand with a gentle touch. Meekness is close to lowliness or humility.

Relevant question: How do you see humility working in your life?

Proverbs 18:21 NKJV

²¹Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Jonathon Edwards called meekness/gentleness" the Christian spirit."

Meekness is an attitude of humility before God and gentleness toward others.

Ephesians 4:2 ESV

²With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

Charles Wesley said, "The person who bears and suffers evils with meekness and silence is the sum of a Christian."

*Meekness has been called "composure of the soul." It's a victory over oneself resulting from having every instinct, impulse, and passion under subjection.

*Meekness governs both our actions and our actions.

Proverbs 25:28 ESV

²⁵A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.

Explain this verse in your own words.

The Greek language uses beautiful word pictures. Four illustrations are used when it speaks of humility: the wind, words, medicine, and a horse.

While medicine can heal, too much can kill.
A gentle breeze is refreshing, but a hurricane is destructive.
Wild horses don't win races.

Do you feel that meekness means feels like weakness?

Explain here:

B. Meekness as an Example

Jesus appeared as the supreme example of humility, a poor Jew caught in the tides of Roman history, frail and impotent, a man destined to be wiped off the face of the earth. Pilate was the personification of Roman power. History was on his side as a part of Rome; he was heir to the earth.

There are two glaring opposites in Jesus and Pilate. While Jesus was in absolute control and meek, he would inherit the earth and the whole universe!

Pilate, on the other hand, was a prisoner to his own pride. He had no inheritance!

Jesus not only taught the paradox, he was the paradox and lived it.

Matthew 5:5 ESV

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Jesus is teaching **NOT** the survival of the fittest, but the meekest!

John Wycliffe translated the 3rd Beatitude, “Blessed be mild men.”

Gentleness and meekness are, indeed, caressing words.

Aristotle said, “So the meek man can balance his anger. It is strength under control. The meek person is strong! He is gentle, meek, and mild but under control. He is as strong as steel.

1. Jesus Meekness

Matthew 11:29 ESV

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Jesus displayed humility in two ways.

Himself

He neither practiced retaliation nor vindictiveness.

He was never insincere!

Luke 23:34 ESV

³⁴ And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”^[a] And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Others

Lion like

Mark 10:13-16 ESV

¹³ And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” ¹⁶ And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

John 2:14-17 ESV

¹⁴ In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting

there. ¹⁵ And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

Matthew 16:21-23 ESV

²¹ From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²² And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! ^[a] This shall never happen to you." ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance ^[b] to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

2. Jesus Smile

Matthew 5:5 ESV

⁵ "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

A gentle and meek spirit has divine approval. To lack one is an indication of one's spiritual status.

3. Jesus Warnings

***Harshness**

Take heed if you are mean in treating others, if there is an absence of gentleness.

***Vengeful**

If you are known as someone never to cross, if you always get your "pound of flesh," be on your guard.

***Uncontrolled**

Suppose rage fills your soul, and so does life. Watch out for a series of explosions occasioned by the "fools" in your life.

4. Jesus Reward

Matthew 5:5 ESV

⁵ "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

They shall inherit the earth!

Romans 8:17 ESV

¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

I Corinthians 6:2 ESV

² Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases?

The meek are the only ones who inherit the earth. The "they" in "they shall inherit" is emphatic: they alone, only they, shall inherit the earth."

They are rich right now, and fifty billion, trillion years into eternity, they will be lavishing in the unfolding of" the immeasurable riches of" God's grace!

Ephesians 2:7 ESV

⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

How do we become Meek? 3 Ways

1. We must realize that a gentle, caressing spirit is a gift of the Holy Spirit. It only comes through grace. We must cast ourselves on God, asking humbly in prayer that he give us life and the spirit of meekness.
2. We must yoke ourselves to Jesus.

Matthew 11:29-30 ESV

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Young ox and older ox yoked together so the older could show the younger the pace and how to heed the direction of the master.

3. We must pay close attention to the progression of thought in the Beatitudes, for it provides us with a three-step ladder to meekness.

The initial step begins in the 1st Beatitude.

Matthew 5:3 ESV

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The poverty of Spirit is a proper knowledge of ourselves. There is nothing in us that would commend us to God; we fall short, and we need God.

Matthew 5:4 ESV

⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

We progress to mourning. The poverty of spirit and spiritual mourning is adverse. We need the lamb.

Matthew 5:5 ESV

⁵ "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Moses is cited as meek.

Numbers 12:1-13 ESV

¹Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman. ²And they said, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" And the Lord heard it. ³Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth. ⁴And suddenly the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting." And the three of them came out. ⁵And the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward. ⁶And he said, "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. ⁷Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. ⁸With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" ⁹And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed. ¹⁰When the cloud removed from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, ^[a]like snow. And Aaron turned toward Miriam, and behold, she was leprous. ¹¹And Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord, do not punish us ^[b]because we have done foolishly and have sinned. ¹²Let her not be as one dead, whose flesh is half eaten away when he comes out of his mother's womb." ¹³And Moses cried to the Lord, "O God, please heal her—please."

God will fight your battles if you just get out of the way and let Him!

He heard what they said and saw what they did, and when God gets ready, tired, and has enough, He will handle it all.

"Get out of God's way!"

Lessons Learned from Meekness

1. Know **WHO** you are.

Exodus 33:11 ESV

¹¹Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

2. Know **YOUR** Purpose

Keep your focus, and stay on purpose.

Let folk do what they're going to do.

3. Let God defend you.

God can handle people better than you.

Remember that Suffering can be Redemptive or Self-inflicted.

Examine your life and ask yourself: Have I brought some things on myself because I was Miriam or Aaron, or was God redeeming me like Moses?

Write it out, and use extra paper if needed.

Pray for the people who prey on you.

A.W.Tozer” The meek man will attain a place of soul rest. He will gladly let God defend him as he walks on humbly. The old struggle to defend himself is over. He has found the peace which meekness brings.”

C. Meekness in Practice

James 1:19 ESV

¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;

Ephesians 4:15 ESV

¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,

Romans 12:18 ESV

¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Galatians 6:1 ESV

¹ Brothers,^[a] if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

Why? Reasons

1. Meek people never lose sight of their flaws, fractures, and failings.
2. Meek people can be honest with **THEMSELVES!**
People that lie to themselves.....I’m fine, I’m good, etc. I cannot be honest with **YOU!**

The elephant's trunk has been considered the most fantastic body part in the animal kingdom. It has no bones but over 40,000 muscles. The elephant's trunk is an example of remarkable strength and precise control. It is strong enough to rip branches from trees but sensitive enough to pick up a single blade of grass!

Warren Wiersbe's” meekness is power under control.”

Proverbs 16:32 ESV

³² Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

Devotional Discussion Questions.....

1. How is humility different from weakness?
2. Describe meekness as power.
3. What is the relationship between humility and self-control?
4. Are meekness and humility similar?
5. How does Galatians 6:1 suggest we handle a believer who is overtaken by a fault?

Monday

Read: Psalm 23

Isaiah 40:11

“Love cures people, the ones who give it and the ones who receive it.”-**Karl Menninger**

Write how God has been gentle with you.

Tuesday

Read:

James 4:6-10

I Peter 5:5-7

“The more humble and obedient to God a man is, the wiser and at peace he will be in all that he does.”

-**Thomas A. Kempis**

Pray for a spirit of humility.

Wednesday

Read:

Proverbs 15:1

Philippians 4:5

“We must learn to regard people less in the light of what they do or omit to do and more in the light of what they suffer.”

-**Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

Show some humility to someone today.

Thursday

Read:

Matthew 5:23-24

Matthew 18:15-17

“The injured party does not want to be compensated because he has been wronged; he wants to be healed because he has been hurt.”-**G.K. Chesterton**

Friday

Read:

Galatians 6:1

James 5:19-20

“The more one judges, the less one loves.”-**Honor’e De Balzac**

Pray for and use hands, legs, feet, and mouth to restore a broken relationship.