

GENTLENESS IS FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Galatians 5:22-23

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Every body likes to be around a gentle person for they are so different from everybody else. There's just not a lot of genuine gentle people around very often. To some, a "gentle" person is a bit weak, afraid to stand up for his/her rights, and even a bit cowardly. "Meekness" is sometimes associated with "gentleness" and to many, being a "meek" person is sort of being "shy." However the Bible is very clear that "gentleness and meekness" are very strong character traits and every Christian should show a spirit of gentleness, meekness. Gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit which indirectly comes from the Lord Jesus.

I. HOW GENTLENESS AND MEEKNESS CAN BE DEFINED

1. The Greeks defined "gentleness, meekness" as:
 - People who are gentle and/or meek seem to have a soothing quality about them:
 - Having a humble and kind demeanor can calm the anger of others.
 - People of gentle conduct, especially those who had the power to act otherwise:
 - A king with the authority to render punishment, but chooses instead to show kindness and forgiveness.
 - Such a king would be praised for his gentle and meek vbehavior.
 - People who can take unkind remarks with good nature:
 - when invovled in something controversial
 - Being able to discuss things without losing one's temper because of unkind and unfair personal remarks.
 - People whose disposition is made up of both strength and gentless combined.
 - The ability to bear reproaches and slights with moderation and not to seek revenge quickly, not easily provoked to anger, is free from bitterness and being able to be quiet and stable in the spirit.
 - However, even gentle people have a place for anger, but for the right reason, at the right moment and for the right amount of time.
 - It is better to err on the side of forgiveness than on the side of anger.
2. Moses and Jesus were examples of gentleness and meekness:
 - The example of Moses - Numbers 12:3
 - He could have scolded, rebuked Aaron and Miriam but he gently kept silent - Numbers 13:1-8
 - He was not a weak person for consider:
 - His reaction and actions to the golden calf - Exodus 32:19-20, 25-28
 - His pleading with God on behalf of the people - Exodus 32:30-32
 - His meekness was the result of a humble opinion of himself.
 - The example of Jesus - Matthew 11:28-30
 - He was meek at his "trial" - Matthew 27:12-14; Isaiah 53:7
 - He was not weak nor lacked courage:
 - He had already demonstrated His powerful strength:
 - He had denounced the Pharisees - Matthew 23:13
 - When He purged the temple - John 2:14-17
 - His meekness at the trial was evidence of strength, not weakness.
 - Gentleness and meekness comes from having a humble opinion of one's self along with the inner strength to control one's emotions, tongue and behavior.

II. THE PLACE OF GENTLENESS/MEEKNESS IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN

1. Places in particular for the Christian to exhibit "gentleness:"
 - The Christian is to receive the Word of God with meekness - James 1:21
 - The Christian is to approach others in error with a spirit of gentleness - Galatians 6:1
 - The Christian is to correct those in opposition to him/her with humility - 2 Timothy 2:24-25
 - The Christian is to answer questions about his/her hope with meekness - 1 Peter 3:15
2. Places in general for the Christian to exhibit "gentleness/meekness:"
 - Meekness is necessary for the Christian who would be wise - James 3:13-18
 - Meekness is necessary for the Christian who would be precious in the sight of God - 1 Peter 3:1-6

CONCLUSION:

1. The Christian who is walking by the Holy Spirit is going to be a gentle/meek person, even in the most trying circumstances:
 - not because he/she is weak or a coward
 - because of his/her humility, joined with the inner strength to control his/her behavior.
2. Jesus is an excellent example as He, at all times, demonstrated what it means to be "gentle and lowly at heart..." - Matthew 11:29
 - Anyone claiming to be a disciple of Jesus should seek to imitate Jesus' example.
3. ***"...Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light..."*** Matthew 11:28-30
4. Christian, how gentle and meek are you?