

Danger of Comparisons

Lesson 11– What is Meekness?

August 19, 2015

A. God's View of Us

Starter Questions

- Are meekness and humility different? Are they the same?
- Did you know that the bible only mentions two people associated with meekness? Who are they?

Wikipedia: Attribute of human nature and behavior. It has been defined several ways: [righteous](#), [humble](#), teachable, and [patient under suffering](#), long suffering willing to follow gospel teachings; an attribute of a true disciple.

Webster Dictionary: Enduring injury with patience and without resentment; [mild](#); deficient in spirit and courage; [submissive](#); not violent or strong; [moderate](#)

Modern English Dictionary: Makes it very clear why meekness is associated with weakness; Synonyms used are: tame, timid, mild, bland, unambitious, retiring, weak, docile, acquiescent, repressed, suppressed, spiritless, broken, and wimpish.

What is Biblical Meekness?

One of the best definitions of meekness is “strength under control”. Meekness does not mean weakness and being a doormat so that everyone can walk all over you. The definition of meekness is someone who is humble, teachable, and patient under suffering. The person who has meekness means that they have the absence of any feelings of being better than others. This also means that they are modest and lowly in spirit.

What is Biblical Humility?

Humility is seen as the act or posture of lowering oneself in relation to others and there is an absence of pride or self-assertion. Someone with humility tends to esteem others better than themselves and often puts others interests ahead of their own interests. It is an attitude towards oneself more than toward others.

Meekness has been contrasted with humility as referring to behavior towards others, where humbleness refers to an attitude towards oneself - meekness meaning restraining one's own power, so as to allow room for others.

B. Scriptures for Lesson:

Matthew 5:3-5; Blessed are the Meek

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

[Meekness](#) is a [fruit of the Spirit](#) that seems very much lost in our aggressive, self-centered culture. Because people associate it with weakness, most today do not admire others for being "meek," but it is not what they assume. Meekness, being a fruit of the Spirit, is an attribute of God Almighty Himself and important to our being in His image and a true witness. Indeed, this characteristic will largely determine how much [peace](#) and contentment are in our lives and how well we do during trials.

Meekness is so important that it is the third characteristic Jesus mentions in His foundational teaching, the Sermon on the Mount. Obviously, the world's ideal of the perfect man is very different from His. The meek are among those so favored that they will share in Jesus' inheritance of the earth. He was the first to collect, in what we call the [Beatitudes](#), a God-authored, organized list of the characteristics of the perfect man.

Given how modern man considers those who are meek, His statement about meekness is almost incomprehensible. [The world](#) would word this, "Blessed are the strong, who can hold their own." The world

favors more conspicuous and so-called heroic virtues. Those who are strongly—almost fiercely—competitive, aggressive and assertive are the ones who receive recognition, admiration and reward. Unfortunately, many Christians have ignored it in practice. Yet remember Jesus very words “Blessed—happy, favored—are the meek”.

This verse has been called by many “among the half dozen most important verses in the Bible.” “The meek shall inherit the earth,” and when they do, they will proceed to govern it. Meekness is a virtue God has determined those who will have dominion in His Family must possess.

Galatians 5:22-23 (KJV): Meekness is a difficult to translate

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law

Meekness has sometimes been called “the most untranslatable of words in the New Testament”. While some have tried to use humility as its equivalent, but both Hebrew and Greek have specific words that are synonyms for humility. Meekness is much more than just humility or gentleness, these are only subsets. Jesus elevated the word's common usage far beyond its normal application.

We should recognize that, when Jesus presents meekness in [Matthew 5:5](#) as a highly desirable quality, He prefaces it with “Blessed are the [poor in spirit](#)” (verse 3) and “Blessed are those who mourn” (verse 4). He places it within a context that contains qualities that are similar to meekness. In other words, meekness is the active fruit of the other two, but whereas being poor in spirit and [mourning](#) are both internal in operation, meekness is both internal and external in its execution in one's life.

Godly meekness is impossible unless we first learn a just and lowly estimate of ourselves. We must become poor in spirit. We do this by coming before God in deep penitence and with a clear knowledge of the vast difference between ourselves and what He is and what He means us to be.

Notice that [Matthew 5:4](#) is in the present tense, meaning that mourning is not confined to our initial repentance—it is a continuous experience. The Christian has much to mourn. If his conscience is kept tender by an ever-deepening discovery of human nature's depravity, his sins—both of omission and commission—are a sense of daily grief. Paul writes in [Romans 8:23](#), “We ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.” He adds in [Romans 7:24](#), “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”

C. Questions for Small Group Discussion:

1. Discuss the biblical difference between humility and meekness? Are we clear on the differences?
2. Why is it that the “world” would not include “Meekness” in its definition of the “Perfect Man” as God does in his Beatitudes? What does the “world” think about “Meekness”?
3. In the Sermon on the Mount, Meekness is the third desirable Godly quality mentioned:
 - a. In Matthew 5:3-5, discuss what each of them mean:
 - “Poor in Spirit”
 - “Those who Mourn”
 - “Meek”
4. Do you believe that Meekness is active fruit of “Poor in Spirit” and “Mourn”? Why or why not, provide specific rationale?
5. Since Matthew 5:4 uses the present tense for “mourning”, what does this mean? How should this affect our daily relationship with Christ and how we conduct ourselves to God?
6. Since “Meekness” is a fruit of the Spirit, how do we obtain it? How do we mature and grow in it as a God given and developed spiritual characteristic?