

Spirituality: Developing a Meek and Quiet Spirit

What do “meek” and “quiet” mean?

“Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel-- rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, **with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit**, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.” 1 Peter 3:3-6

gentle...(**meek** KJV) *praus*: mild, i.e. (by implication) humble:—meek. [mildness of disposition; gentleness of spirit; accepting God’s dealings with us as good w/o disputing or resisting] (Thayer)

quiet...*hesuchios*: properly, keeping one's seat (sedentary), i.e. (by implication) still (undisturbed, undisturbing):—peaceable, quiet. [tranquil] (Thayer)

incorruptible...*aphthartos*: undecaying (in essence or continuance):—not corruptible, immortal. (Thayer)

hidden...*kruptos*: concealed, i.e. private:—hid(-den), inward[-ly], secret. (Thayer)

“Gentleness or meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest. It stems from trust in God's goodness and control over the situation. The gentle person is not occupied with self at all.” (Thayer)

Who is to be meek?

“Blessed are the **meek** [gentle], For they shall inherit the earth.” Matthew 5:5 *praus*

“Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with **meekness** the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.” James 1:21 *prautes*, noun form of *praus*

“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the **meekness** of wisdom.” James 3:13 *prautes*

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with **meekness** and fear,” 1 Peter 3:15 *prautes*

Who is to have a quiet spirit?

“that you also aspire to **lead a quiet life**, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you,” 1 Thessalonians 4:11 *hesuchazo*, verb form of *hesuchios*

“for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a **quiet** and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.” 1 Timothy 2:2 *hesuchios*

“Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in **quietness** and eat their own bread.” 2 Thessalonians 3:12 *hesuchia*, feminine of *hesuchios*

“Let a woman learn in **silence** with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in **silence**.” 1 Timothy 2:11, 12 *hesuchia*

What does “meek and quiet spirit” NOT mean?

- **Meek & Quiet ≠ Weak** (Think of Jesus and Moses)

A meek person is “one who has channeled his strengths into the service of God.” (Wayne Jackson, “Matthew 5:5—Meek Inherit the Earth,” www.christiancourier.com)

- **Meek & Quiet ≠ Silent** (Sometimes you have to speak up)

“Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.” Matthew 18:15

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with **meekness** and fear;” 1 Peter 3:15

- **Meek & Quiet ≠ Passive** (You do not give in when someone in authority tells you to do wrong, or tries to stop you from what you should do)

“And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. “For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”” Acts 4:18-20

“And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, saying, “Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man’s blood on us!” But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:27-29

- **Meek & Quiet ≠ Unwilling to Lead** (Women lead women; women also lead men by example)

“the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things-- that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.” Titus 2:3-5

“Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.” 1 Peter 3:1, 2

Why are meekness/gentleness and quietness important?

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **gentleness**, self-control. Against such there is no law.” Galatians 5:22–23 *prautes*

Results of Disobedience

- poor example to others
- badly-trained children
- diminished credibility
- bad feelings, dissension, lack of fellowship, so “the body” (church) cannot function well.

Results of Obedience

- light of world; show forth Christ
- well-trained children
- credibility when teaching others
- peace, love, fellowship; “the body” (church) functions as it should

Who is a good example of meekness?

• Jesus

“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.” Matthew 11:29 (KJV: **meek**)

“Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.’” Matthew 21:5 (KJV: **meek**)

This entry into Jerusalem has been termed the triumph of Christ. It was indeed the triumph of humility over pride and worldly grandeur; of poverty over affluence; and of meekness and gentleness over rage and malice.

He is coming now meek, full of kindness and compassion to those who were plotting his destruction! He comes to deliver up himself into their hands; their king comes to be murdered by his subjects, and to make his death a ransom price for their souls!

—Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*, 1832

• Those who seek the Lord

“Seek the LORD, all you **meek** of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden In the day of the LORD’S anger.” Zephaniah 2:3

• Moses

“Now the man Moses was very **humble**, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.” Numbers 12:3 (KJV: **meek**)

Tracing Moses’ history

“But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”” Exodus 3:11

“Then Moses answered and said, “But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, ‘The LORD has not appeared to you.’” Exodus 4:1

“Then Moses said to the LORD, “O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.”” Exodus 4:10

“And Moses spoke before the LORD, saying, “The children of Israel have not heeded me. How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?”” Exodus 6:12

Brought about the ten plagues, Exodus 8–12

Led three million people out of Egypt, Exodus 12

Parted the Red Sea for Israel to cross, then demolished the Egyptian army, Exodus 14

““Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.” Exodus 17:6

“And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed... So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.” Exodus 17:11, 13

Met God and received the law at Sinai, Exodus 19–31

“So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend...” Exodus 33:11a

Met God again, Exodus 24; “the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him” (v 39)

* **Question:** How was Moses able to be meek, in spite of his extraordinary relationship with God and the mighty works God accomplished by Moses' hand?

What kind of thinking/behavior is NOT meek and quiet?

- Telling everyone what you want, what you think, and why you're right
- Making sure everyone knows when you're dissatisfied
- Making sure nobody gets away with saying anything incorrect
- Being the sort of person that makes other people feel they must "walk on eggshells"
- Always showing off and acting in a way that demands attention

All of these show a preoccupation with one's own desires and a desire to direct attention to self

What special challenges do we face re/ meekness and quietness?

(see "Who is to be Meek," above)

- Matthew 5:5

- James 1:21

- James 3:13

- 1 Peter 3:15

A meek/quiet spirit does not come naturally to everyone!

What if your personality makes meekness and quietness difficult for you?

- You still have to obey God with a submissive, obedient heart (Do you want to?)
- You need to review your behavior.

"Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?--unless indeed you are disqualified." 2 Corinthians 13:5

"For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." Galatians 6:3, 4

- In the moment, you have to ask yourself: Am I being gentle/meek? Am I being peacable?
- You should ask someone wise about your attitude and behavior.
- You should make yourself accountable to someone.
- You have to be willing to accept correction
- Be grateful you have someone who is willing to correct you.
- Study Moses; study Jesus.