
Meekness

- Meekness defined
 - Nelson's Bible Dictionary defines "meekness as... "an attitude of humility toward God and gentleness toward men, springing from a recognition that God is in control. Although weakness and meekness may look similar, they are not the same. Weakness is due to negative circumstances, such as lack of strength or lack of courage. But meekness is due to a person's conscious choice. It is strength and courage under control, coupled with kindness."
 - Perhaps the last sentence is the best idea – strength or power under control
 - It is never weakness or fearfulness
 - Psalm 37:1-11
- To govern our passions and resentments
 - James 1:21 - to receive the word
 - The word here filthiness, occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, It means properly filth; and then is applied to evil conduct considered as disgusting or offensive. To a pure mind, this is one of its most odious characteristics; for, to such a mind, sin in any form is more loathsome than the most offensive object can be to any of the senses.
 - Receive with meekness the engrafted word. That is, open the mind and heart to instruction, and to the fair influence of truth. The meaning here is, that we should allow the principles of the gospel to be engrafted in our nature; that however perverse we may be, or however bitter and vile the fruits which it might bring forth of its own accord, it might, through the engrafted word, produce the fruits of righteousness.
 - James 3:13 - to teach the word
 - If we are going to be able to bring others to Christ and teach them his word we have to show that we can live an upright life.
 - It is remarkable that the truly wise man is always characterized by a calm spirit, a mild and placid demeanor, and by a gentle, though firm, enunciation of his message. A noisy, boisterous, and stormy demeanor we never select as a safe counsellor.

- Ephesians 4:1-2
 - Exact same greek word used in Galatians 5:23
 - Meekness in this verse relates to the manner in which we receive injuries. We are to bear them patiently, and not to retaliate, or seek revenge. The meaning here is, that; we show forth the gospel when we show its power in enabling us to bear injuries without anger or a desire of revenge, or with a mild and forgiving spirit;
- Matthew 26:51-56
 - When Peter lashes out and cuts off the servant's ear, Jesus doesn't praise him for loyalty. He stops him. He reminds him that violence isn't the answer. He asks Peter, "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father ...?" (Verse 53)
 - Jesus had the power to end the confrontation instantly, but He chose the cross instead.
 - Jesus is not displaying a lack of strength but rather strength and courage under control, coupled with a little kindness.
 - He chose God's will over his own impulses.
 - He chose obedience over self-preservation and it secured our salvation.
- To lead us to soon be pacified
- Philippians 4:11, 12, 14
- Paul having just said that he rejoiced in the gift of the Philippians, you might expect him to say, "after all, I really needed what you sent!"
 - There is little doubt that he needed help
 - He spoke of his "affliction" in verse 14
 - Paul, however, wanted his readers to know that his rejoicing was not so much for the gift as it was for the concern it expressed
 - Thus he quickly added, "Not that I speak in respect of want" – In other words, "I am not saying this as a hint to send another gift
 - It is kind of like the gifts you get from your children when they are young – they are special, not because of the gift, but because of who they came from and the love behind them

- Paul now makes a Declaration
 - “I have learned, in whatsoever state [situation – ESV, circumstance – NAS] I am
 - These circumstances that Paul listed might be considered as the ups and downs of life – the good times and the bad times
 - There were times when Paul was in need, and times when he lived in plenty
 - Now here is the problem we have with the ups and downs of life:
 - When we are down, the danger is despair – and when we are up the danger is pride
 - Paul did not let the downs degrade him or the ups to exalt him
 - Paul understood, as should we, that the circumstances of life change in a moment and that none of those circumstances define who we are
 - He believed that the Lord could handle anything that happened to him
 - 1 Timothy 6:6-8... Hebrews 13:5
- Exactly what did Paul mean when he spoke of being “content”?
 - “Contentment” is sometimes misunderstood – it is not complacency or a false peace based on ignorance, and it is not pretending that a bad situation is a good one
 - To truly understand “contentment” we need to look at the Greek word
 - The word translated “content” in 1 Timothy 6:6-8 and Hebrews 13:5 (a form of arkeo) means sufficient
 - The word in Philippians 4:11 translated “content” is from a compound word which combines arkeo and the word for “self” (autos) – thus, the literal translation could be “self-sufficient”
 - The word was used to describe the person who through discipline had become independent of external circumstances, and who discovered within himself resources that were more than adequate for any situation that might arise
 - Paul’s satisfaction was not based on outward situation, but on inward sufficiency
 - This sufficiency was not based on personal resources

- It was based on divine resources
- Notice too that Paul “learned” to be content
 - Paul is telling us that the Christian life is a learning experience
 - Contentment is not something that we are born with
 - We learn through:
 - Painful experience ... 2 Corinthians 12:7-10
 - Earnest prayer ... Philippians 4:6-7
 - If Paul could learn to be content, so can we
- The secret according to verse 13 of Philippians chapter 4 is Christ
 - He has been our example in most all of the fruit of the spirit
 - Here he is revealed as the source of strength and contentment.
 - The world has not learned this – they think contentment comes from education, money, etc
 - Ephesians 3:16-17
 - Colossians 1:9-11
- You cannot have enough meekness.