

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Galatians 5:16-25**.
- B. Some translations speak of gentleness, others meekness.
- C. A brief review of the fruits of the Spirit that we have already studied:
 - 1. Love-- to agape God, men, and self.
 - 2. Joy-- deeper than a short lived happiness, a disposition of contentment.
 - 3. Peace-- harmony with God, others, and self.
 - 4. Patience-- to endure and hold back anger resulting forgiveness.
 - 5. Kindness-- to desire the welfare of those who tax our patience.
 - 6. Goodness-- to do that which is right as defined by God.
 - 7. Faithfulness-- to perform up to our ability and then to mature even further.
- C. Tonight, as we look at the 8th of 9 fruits of the Spirit, we look at the:
 - 1. Gentleness of action.
 - 2. Meekness of the heart and soul.

I. GENTLENESS (from *Albert Barnes*).

- A. The word means goodness, kindness, benignity.
- B. It is opposed to a harsh, crabbed, crooked temper.
- C. Gentleness is a disposition to be pleased; it is a mildness and calmness of spirit.
- D. It is an unruffled disposition that treats all with urbanity (courtesy, manners, etiquette) and politeness.
- E. Gentleness is one of the regular effects of the Spirit's operations on the heart. Religion makes no one morose or sour.
- F. It sweetens the temper; corrects an irritable disposition; makes the heart kind; disposes us to make all around us as happy as possible.
- G. Gentleness is true politeness; a kind of politeness which can far better be learned in the school of Christ than anywhere else.

II. MEEKNESS (from *W. E. Vine*).

- A. Meekness is that temper of spirit in which we accept God's dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. Meekness is closely linked with the word humility.
- B. This meekness, however, being first of all a meekness before God, is also such in the face of evil men. True meekness will deal with the insults and injuries evil men inflict as being permitted and employed by God for the chastening and purifying of His elect.
- C. While the English word meek sometimes suggests weakness, in the Greek it suggests nothing of the kind. Meekness deals with the condition of the mind and heart (the strength thereof in the face of injustice), while gentleness speaks of the appropriate actions to be taken (strength under control).
- D. The meekness manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer is the fruit of power. The common assumption is that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help himself; but the Lord was "meek" because He had the infinite resources of God at His command and knew when to use them and when not to.
- E. Described negatively, meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is equanimity (composure or serenity) of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all.

III. MEEKNESS (from the *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*).

- A. In meekness, Moses, while maintaining strength of leadership, was ready to accept personal injury without resentment of recrimination (Num. 12:1-3).

Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married (for he had married a Cushite woman); **2** and they said, “Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us as well?” And the LORD heard it. **3** (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth.)

- B. In the NT meekness refers to an inward attitude; gentleness is expressed in outward actions.
- C. It is part of the X-like character produced only by the Spirit (Gal. 5:23).
gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
- D. The meek do not resent adversity because they accept everything as being the effect of God’s wise and loving purpose for them. They accept injuries from men (as Moses above), knowing that these are permitted by God for their ultimate good (see 2Sam. 16:11).

IV. SOME VERSES ON BEING MEEK.

- A. Paul appeals to the meekness of X (2Cor. 10:1).
Now I, Paul, myself urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ-- I who am meek when face to face with you, but bold toward you when absent!
- B. Xians are charged to show all meekness of character (Ti. 3:2).
to malign no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.
- C. For meekness becomes God’s elect (Col. 3:12).
And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;
- D. The “man of God” is urged to follow after meekness” for his own sake (1Tim. 6:11).
But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.
- E. When dealing with the ignorant and erring, one is to exhibit a spirit of meekness (1Cor. 4:21; Gal. 6:1).
(1Cor 4:21) What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod or with love and a spirit of gentleness?
(Gal 6:1) Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.
- F. Those who oppose sound doctrine are to be corrected in meekness (2Tim. 2:25).
with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,
- G. James exhorts Xians to “receive with meekness the implanted word” (Jas. 1:21).
Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.
- H. Meekness is part of the Xian’s hope (1Pet. 3:15).
but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;
- I. Supreme meekness is revealed in the character of Jesus (Mt. 11:29; 21:5).
(Mt 11:29) "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.
(Mt 21:5) "SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, 'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.'"
- J. The meek shall inherit the earth (Mt. 5:5). Christians will have the proper attitude toward everything and everyone in the earth and be therefore a perfect part of it. They will accept the portion of things given them by God and not be bitter for having little, nor be selfish or jealous desiring more.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. First, be meek (strength under control) and lowly in heart.
- B. Second, respond in gentleness (appropriate actions) to those around you.
- C. Jesus is the perfect example of all of the traits of the Spirit, especially meekness.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.