

Look at Jesus being slapped in the face viciously, meanly, and repeatedly, and simply taking it, without any rebuttal, and that when He had all the power to retaliate and knock all His scoffers flat, just like that [Matthew 26:53]! Oh, see Jesus allowing soldier after soldier to line up in front of Him, to spit on His face and laugh Him to scorn, and He endured with no revenge whatsoever. See Him before the Sanhedrin, and before Herod, and before Pilate, continually misrepresented and falsely accused, and not saying a word in response! The only human being Who did no wrong ever, and the One Who always had a perfect defense, yet He never defended Himself. As Isaiah 53:7 had foretold about Jesus, “*He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb [silent], so He openeth not His mouth.*” Indeed, as 1 Peter 2:23 states, “*when He was reviled, [He] reviled not again [He did not revile in return]; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judges righteously.*” So Jesus in gentleness, with meekness and mildness, permitted men to take Him and roughly take His arms and feet and nail them onto and into that wooden cross, and He let them set that cross on Golgotha and be hung there, crucified between two well known criminals of that day, and His first words from the cross were, “*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!*” [Luke 23:34]

Do you see in this all so clearly too in the Person and life of Jesus, this fruit of the Spirit, meekness? Gentleness? O, how very meek and mild Jesus showed and proved Himself to be! The Lord Jesus was and is still full of this gentleness, meekness and mildness, not only as the Example for us, but above all, as the Mediator, the Saviour, even as He came to make an atonement for all the hardness, rebelliousness, unsubmittingness, and lovelessness and bitterness of His people, of sinful people like us, by nature. To Jesus the Saviour we must and may go, if we will be saved from sin not only, but also if you and I would have and increase more and more in the fruit of the Spirit, including the beautiful gracious fruit of meekness. Listen again next week to learn more about this fruit of meekness, turning from the example of this fruit to the explanation and excellence and exercise of it. In the mean time remember Jesus’ words in Matthew 5:5, “*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*” Amen.

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**BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST**

*Radio Ministry of the FREE REFORMED CHURCHES of North America*

*Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)*



### THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS MEEKNESS [1]

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness [in the way of kindness], goodness, faith [faithfulness], meekness and temperance [self control] Galatians 5:22-23.* This time we are looking at the fruit of meekness.

Again we find out that it is not so easy to clearly define or explain the term translated as meekness in the King James Version, and in other versions often as gentleness. Perhaps the best way to describe and define this word from the original is to state it as meaning being meek and mild, meek especially before God and mild before people. This fruit of the Spirit, meekness, is all about being very tenderhearted before God and towards people. It is about being meek in the sense of always and again submissive to the will and way of the Lord, and mild in the sense of caring for people, and wanting always just the best for others. It is a beautiful, most God-honouring, love-promoting, attractive, and useful fruit. You can't help but notice when people have this fruit of the Spirit and it always leaves an impression, like a sweet scent of something divine and something undeniably good.

This week, let me simply bring in some examples from Scripture to see what we really mean with this fruit. That should help us next time in explaining this fruit more, telling of the excellence of it, and the exercise of this fruit. The goal of these two messages, with God's blessing, is that we not only study and admire this fruit, but that this fruit of the Spirit, meekness, actually grows and flourishes in your and my life.

Can you think of any examples of this fruit of gentleness in the Bible? What about Abraham with Lot? Abraham, you know, was the more important of these two men and the older of them. God had promised to Abraham the land of Canaan, and he would be the father of believers. Abraham was Lot's uncle. Lot was a tag-along, you might say, in Abraham's family line, a man who was largely dependent on Abraham for his livelihood and safety. Yet when Abraham and Lot part ways, for as we can read in Genesis 13:6, “*the land was not able to bear [support] them, that they might dwell together, for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together*”, then Abraham willingly let Lot take whatever land he wanted. He allowed Lot the first choice, thus giving up his own rights and prerogatives for the sake of his nephew, and for the sake of harmony between their

households, and for the sake of their testimony before the heathen in the land. These things were much more important to Abraham than standing up for his own rights. Abraham had every right to choose first the land he would have, but being meek and mild, he gladly surrendered his rights, and laid aside his power. Abraham showed the fruit of the Spirit, meekness.

Another example is Joseph, who had been so mistreated by his brothers, sold by them treacherously as a slave to Egypt. We are told, when by God's gracious plan, Joseph came to be second in command, just under Pharaoh over all of Egypt, he then was in a position to take real revenge on his brothers. When they came to Egypt asking for grain for their starving families, Joseph could have refused to give them anything. In fact, he could have put them into prison or made them right then and there to become Egyptian slaves for the rest of their lives, and he could even have killed them if he so chose. But instead he was only full of forgiveness for them, and full of love and care. He wept so loud when he made himself known to them, that the whole household of Pharaoh heard it, and could see that Joseph sure had feelings of affection for these men from Canaan. We read in Genesis 50:19-20 even that Joseph said to his brothers, "*Fear not [do not be afraid]:...[for while] ye thought evil against me...God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.* Joseph was used by God to provide storehouses of grain before a seven year famine came. "*Now therefore, fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them and spake kindly unto them.*" That was the fruit of the Spirit, meekness, being meek before God and His ways and mild before people and their ways.

Can you think of yet another example? There is Moses of whom we read in Numbers 12:3, "*Now the man Moses was very meek [in the Greek Septuagint version of the Hebrew you have the same root word as in Galatians 5:23, very meek and mild], more than all men who were on the face of the earth.*" By God's grace, through many trials and oppositions, Moses led the people of Israel for more than 40 years, and all the while he bore with them, with great meekness. When Aaron and Miriam rose up in opposition to him, and Miriam was punished with the plague of leprosy, then Moses prays earnestly and lovingly still, "*And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech Thee.*" [Numbers 12:13] When the people continually rebelled against God and God would punish them thoroughly and leave them even, then Moses prays, as we read in Exodus 32:32 "*blot me, I pray Thee out of Thy book*"...'yes, in their place, Lord, only forgive them'. So Moses pleaded for the people! Also, when he himself could not for his sin enter the promised land, having lost his temper because of the people's waywardness, we don't read anywhere that Moses held a grudge against the people, but he submitted to the will of God and loved the people still. Moses is an example of one having the fruit of the Spirit,

gentleness, being meek and mild.

There are more examples to mention. Think of David with King Saul, who constantly pursued David to kill him, living in jealous rage of him. We are told in I Samuel 24, when David had a golden opportunity to kill Saul, being unknown to Saul in the same cave together, then David only secretly cut off a corner of Saul's robe, "*and David's heart smote him [troubled him]*", because he had cut off even just a little piece of Saul's robe. You see David was so tenderhearted before God, he would not take matters in his own hands, and he was tenderhearted towards King Saul, caring about him still. He had something of the fruit of the Spirit, meekness, being meek and mild.

What about Paul in the New Testament? He was by far the most educated of the apostles, and the one, as far as we can tell, that God used most widely and effectively in His service. Yet Paul refused to put any confidence in himself, "*in the flesh*", as he states in Philippians 3:3. And he testifies in I Corinthians 15:9, "*I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet [not worthy] to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*" Paul knew he was what he was only always by the grace of God, and through Christ Who strengthened him. [I Corinthians 15:10; Philippians 4:13] Paul went about his ministry appealing to people and pleading with them, as he himself tells us in II Corinthians 10:1, "*by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.*"

Yes, and mentioning the Name of Christ, we come of course to **THE** example of gentleness, being meek and mild. This fruit of the Spirit was and is perfectly found in and with Jesus in His Person and in all His work and ministry. Jesus could say of Himself as He does also in Matthew 11:29, "*I am meek and lowly in heart*", in other words meek and mild in fullness and perfection. Consider with what gentleness, being meek and mild, Jesus suffered and endured whatever He had to go through, in order as Saviour of sinners to satisfy the justice of God and pay the full punishment for sin in the sinner's place. Just think of Jesus in Gethsemane with his face to the ground, sweating blood in agony of soul as the prospect of God's full righteous wrath upon sinners was about to fall upon Him in body and soul, and we hear Him praying then, don't we, as recorded in Matthew 26:39, "*O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.*" You see total humble submission to God His Father in all His ways and leading. And along with that so much tenderhearted care for people, even for those who were out to kill Him and betray Him and mistreat Him, and those too who so misunderstood Him!

With gentleness, being meek and mild, Jesus endured all the suffering which people brought on Him, without uttering in response one bitter word, and without any complaint. It is moving to consider this. When arrested, Jesus calls to the one who betrayed him saying, "*Friend*" [Matthew 26:50] and He heals the ear of one who came to arrest Him [Luke 22:51].