



## Meekness

*Meekness is the believer's even-tempered disposition of heart which issues forth from union with God in Christ, consisting in self-denial and love for his neighbour. This results in having fellowship with his neighbour in an agreeable, congenial, and loving manner; in relinquishing his rights; in enduring the violation of his rights without becoming angry, being forgiving, and in rewarding it with good.*

The will loves this virtue, embraces it, and by way of exercise is increasingly able to control and govern the affections, in order that they do not become too violent and too disorderly. To be tender in countenance and words can frequently be nothing more than hypocrisy. The very term "meekness" implies that the heart must be tender. If the soul is in such a frame, then whatever issues forth from this fountain will cause the entire disposition of a person – as well as his countenance and words – to be unpretentious and tender. "(...) *even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit*" (1 Pet 3:4).

The essence of this virtue consists in having an even-tempered disposition of heart. Since all that satisfies man must come from an external source, he has a desire for, and is inclined toward, that which he believes will satisfy him. Since he does not have God in view at all (or only partially), he focuses either fully or partially upon that which is of the world. More particularly, he desires that toward which he is most inclined, or what most suits his abilities. Since people have desires toward the same thing, and thus are a hindrance to each other, the heart of those who are hindered in achieving their objective will be stirred up and tossed to and fro by an inner turmoil – as if they were at sea during a storm. A meek person has chosen God to be his portion, however, and perceives all that is in the world to be vanity, and knows that no one will either speak or do anything except God wills it. Thus, as he trusts in God, his heart will be even-tempered and fixed. His heart is neither in turmoil nor restless, but is of an even-tempered, steadfast, and peaceful disposition.

This even-temperedness is accompanied by:

- 1) *Flexibility*; a meek person is cooperative and will adjust himself to another person; that is, insofar as it is not contrary to God's will. "*Yea, all of you be subject one to another*" (1 Pet 5:5).
- 2) *Agreeableness*; the meek person stubbornly insists neither upon his own will nor upon his own judgment in temporal and neutral matters – as long as it is not contrary to God's law. He will listen to the views of and comply with the will of others; he will readily permit himself to be persuaded to that end. "*But the wisdom that is from above is ... peaceable*" (James 3:17).
- 3) *Loveliness*; the meek person is charming in his speech and actions. He is good-natured, a pleasure to deal with, and friendly, so that it is a delight to interact with him. "*Whatsoever things are lovely ... think on these things*" (Phil 4:8); "*...be ... gentle, showing all meekness unto all men*" (Titus 3:2); "*Let your moderation be known unto all men*" (Phil 4:5); "*Be courteous*" (1 Pet 3:8).

Meekness has been held before you in its nature, so that it might be to you as a mirror in which you can observe yourself – a mirror whereby you can ascertain how much or little you resemble a meek person. Apply this freely to your heart. To be void of the virtue of meekness – and thus to

have a disposition which is to the contrary – is a most abominable sin and a more wretched condition to be in than you imagine. Be first convinced of this. Take then to heart what manner of person you are before God and what will befall you due to this.

Always hold before you the example of the meek Jesus. To that end read the gospels frequently, continually taking note of the manner in which the Lord Jesus manifested His meekness. Impress this upon your heart in such a manner, so that, so to speak, the very nature of it is transferred unto you. And if something occurs which is unsettling, allow your thoughts to turn to the gospels to ascertain whether or not the Lord Jesus has been in such a situation and how He conducted Himself under those circumstances, or how He would have conducted Himself in such a situation – and then follow His example.

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