

THE POWER OF MEEKNESS

God's power shown through His meekness

David testified to the meek and gentle heart of God after being delivered from the hand of all his enemies. He stood then, no longer as a shepherd boy, but as a king and pointed to the secret of his success: *You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great (Ps.18:35)*. Jesus was the creator of the universe, which was then crucifying Him. The strength of God's character and restraint is seen in His meekness. He could destroy all the earth. He could start over, yet He restrained Himself and made it 'all right' in a very painful way. **Proverbs 20:28** says: *Mercy (God's grace) and truth (of life in Christ) preserve the king, and by loving-kindness (not by what David deserves)*. God upholds David's throne.

Practical tip: How do you exercise the authority and power given to you? As a parent, as a husband/wife, as a worker, manager or Christian? Are you merciless in your pursuit of right and wrong? Or can those under you testify of your loving-kindness and gentleness despite their mistakes? There are many ways of doing the right thing. We need to exercise God's disciplines with meekness!

Prayer: Father of mercy, You say that the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace (**Ps.37:11**). We confess that we have little peace as we judge and even present You as a merciless God. Please teach us meekness in all our ways. Teach us how to correct and discipline and be good stewards the way Jesus would do.

God's meekness does not make Him weak

Meekness is power under control. It is the restraint of power for the accomplishment of a higher cause. Meekness is never to be confused with weakness. Weakness is the absence of strength and power, when one has no options left. Meekness is possessing power, yet restraining oneself from using it, choosing to be meek for redemptive purposes, for love. Meekness is also not to be confused with personality traits. A laid-back personality is not to be equated with meekness. An example of meekness versus weakness is clearly seen in the courtroom scene with Jesus and Pontius Pilate, just prior to the crucifixion. **John 19:10-11** says: *Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above."* Some people today look at Jesus and say He was weak at that moment. This is not true. Jesus had power available to Him far beyond anything we could imagine. Yet He restrained Himself. Even at the most crucial hour and most critical moment He responded to Pontius Pilate's false assessment of the situation with the powerful truth.

Practical tip: You are given power on this earth, whether it is as a parent, in the work situation etc. What are you doing with it? Are you misusing your power/authority to suit your own needs e.g. to make private calls, take things from work or church that do not belong to you? We must constantly guard our hearts and minds by asking ourselves whether we are still walking in absolute honesty and integrity. Furthermore, we need to know how others experience our leadership. Ask those closest to you to tell you how they experience your way of handling issues. It might be painful to hear at first. **DO NOT DEFEND** yourself all the time! Take these things to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to show you the areas He wants you to change.

Prayer: Father in heaven, I confess that there are areas of my life where I lord it over others so that I can have my own way. I confess that I have not been completely honest and trustworthy in all that is entrusted to me. Forgive me for telling lies to cover my weaknesses. Teach me to own up to my weaknesses and help me by Your Holy Spirit to be meek and gentle like You.

The gift of meekness

Seek the Lord, all you meek of the earth ... Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden in the day of the Lord's anger (Zeph.2:3).

Meekness is really a special gift to humanity and yet one of the most resisted. From the beginning, the sin of pride (bitterness and envy) manifested itself in violence and oppression. In **Genesis 4** the manifestation of humanity's fallen state appeared in the violent murder of Abel. Violence continued to spread throughout earth until the flood (**Gen.6**). Still, the seeds of violence remained. Sodom and Gomorrah are good examples of this. Even today violence rules our earth. Moreover, it often rules in our hearts. In our attitudes. Violence rules in the way we think about ourselves. Many hate themselves; teenagers cut themselves with sharp objects. Many hate others and hurt or abuse them in some way. It is all about hurting, destroying and oppressing – to control. It is the opposite of love and gentleness. God is the most powerful person in the universe. Satan tried to take control in order to gain His kingdom. Ever since, this is our fallen nature as well, to lord it over others and rule over them, to be in control and have them do what we want.

Practical tip: Take time today and ponder the traits of violence in your own heart and life. Do you struggle with frustration and anger? Most of us do. We have need for God's gentleness and love to drive out this spirit of fear that is raging in and through us. Write down instances where your anger and hardness of heart got the better of you, even over the past week, and as the Lord reminds you. Now start praying about each of these things. Ask God to forgive you where you have hurt others. Pray for His meekness and loving-kindness to grow in your life.

Prayer: Father of mercy, thank you for Your grace towards me. I can clearly see the shortcomings in my life. Forgive me for my hardness of heart, for my need of control and wanting things my way, even in small matters between friends and family. Please teach me true humility, give me a meek and gentle heart and change the words of my mouth to glorify Your Name in all circumstances.