

Everybody has at one time or another felt frustration. Most of us are probably feeling frustrated even right now. We might be frustrated with our situation. We might be frustrated with someone in our life. We might be suffering from something physical or mental. And if that isn't enough, we get more frustrated by the fact that we don't seem to know how to fix the situation.

Part of the problem is that we don't feel we have something we need to get past this frustration. We need to be empowered. We need to have more money. We need to move to a new area. We need to get out of this relationship. We need another book to read, another class to learn. When we can't get what we need, we get...frustrated.

This cycle can go on and on to the point where we don't see an end in sight. And when we finally get to that point, we can approach this in three ways: We can fight, we can give up or we can be strong. This is where the virtue of meekness comes in. Meekness!? What does that have to do with my frustration, with my anxiety (because frustration often times causes anxiety)? Everything! Our problem isn't with being meek. It's with our understanding of what "meek" means.

Example: The movie, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, takes place in an insane asylum from the past. I'm sure that the hospitals that care for these people today are much different, but the stories we have heard about these places in the past usually bring shudders down our spine. They were horrendous places to live with horrendous people brutalizing and torturing these patients who had no control over what was happening to them. In the movie, most of the patients were either frustrated or resigned. The character that Jack Nicholson plays becomes extremely frustrated with his situation towards the end of the movie and fights to take control of his situation which basically ends his life. Most of the other patients have all resigned themselves to their situations including the abuses they endure.

This is where we find ourselves when we are frustrated. We are in this situation that we have no control over and we don't know how we're going to get out of it. So we act like the Nicholson character, who fights in vain to change his situation or we act like the other patients who just become resigned to their situation and take what they are given, lose their hope and end up as shells of who they were meant to be. In our world today, it is these people who we consider meek. We recognize that they are in a situation that they cannot control and instead of fighting to get out of their situation, they become resigned, no fight. No effort to change the situation. Just acceptance with the attitude of, "Well, that's the way it is and there's nothing I can do about it."

But this is not the definition of meekness. Meekness is not weakness. It is not resignation. Meekness is strength. It is strength in a situation where you seem to have no control. It might look a lot like weakness, which is why we have decided we don't like to be meek. But it is actually quite the opposite.

Back to the movie. There is one character in the movie that displays the virtue of meekness. Chief. Throughout the movie, this big hulking guy seems to be a little

different than all the other characters. We're not sure why, but we see him as aloof, different, quiet. We also realize he is strong. At the end of the movie, we realize how strong he actually is when he leaves the asylum and we recognize that he was never resigned to his position but was patient, strong, waiting.

When we find ourselves in a situation where we are unable to control or influence the circumstances, our typical response is to become frustrated, anxious, angry. But the virtue of meekness is strength, and specifically, strength from the Holy Spirit. We are given a strength and an understanding of our circumstances. We recognize the fact that we are not in control of any of our situations but that God is in control. Then we believe that God will conclude the situation in the best way. Sometimes, this way is not apparent to us. Sometimes this way is not in OUR best interest, but we recognize that there is more to our lives and this world than our own best interest.

At this point, we give it up to God. We become strong because we recognize that we have the power of God behind us, that God is in control, that the God who created the universe and has set all the wheels in motion is the one who is guiding our situation and that it will all turn out right. And we become strong because we know this and we accept God's ability to direct our lives and our circumstances.

In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul speaks of a thorn that was given to him and he prays three times to have God remove it, but God says to him that his situation is not going to change because he has a greater purpose. When Paul recognizes this, he finds strength in his "weakness". He doesn't become bitter. He doesn't become resigned. He becomes strong. This is what meekness is. Strength in a situation where you do not seem to have any control but you recognize God is in control and you give your will up for His will.

Jesus, in Matt 21:5, went into Jerusalem "meek and sitting on an ass." In Matt 11:29, he says he is meek and lowly. However, the greatest example of his meekness came when he was being brutally beaten by the Roman soldiers prior to his crucifixion. Here, when he could have called down the angels of heaven to protect him or even he himself used the powers he possessed to destroy his enemies, instead was silent and kept his mouth shut as he was sent as a lamb to slaughter. In his situation, he could be seen to have given up, to be resigned. But what we always see is his strength. Jesus shows us what it means to be meek.

So how does this help you in your situation? Do you feel like you have no control over what is happening in your life? Do you feel like you have to get into the fight of your life to survive? Or just give in and resign yourself to your situation? These are the two options that the world gives us today. God does not call us to give up and quit nor does he call us to fight so we can get our way. We need to look at our situations and pray that God works in them. When we see that God is working in our situation, whether it is to our benefit, or like Paul and Jesus, against our best interest, we need to recognize that it is God who is in charge and see His bigger plan. By continuing to hope, by continuing to be patient, we do not show a weakness, but instead show the world that we are strong because we believe even through our sufferings that God will provide. It is this strength

of resolve, of character, that makes the rest of the world say, “What is it that they know that I don’t know? How can I get some of that?” This is how the early church grew. Although they were jailed, tortured, beaten, whipped, sent to the lion’s den, killed, they continued to sing right up to their deaths. They continued to be strong right to their deaths.

If you are in a situation right now, or when that situation occurs, where you are not in control of what is happening to you, do not try to force a change in the situation in your own power – you have none. Do not resign yourself to defeat. Go to God with your requests and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your heart and your mind in Christ Jesus. Learn meekness. Learn to have more faith in your God than yourself. Learn to be strong in the face of impossible situations because you know that God is in control. Remember what Jesus looked like even while he was being sacrificed for us. He knew the bigger picture. He knew how things would turn out. And he endured with quiet strength. He was meek. Be meek in your situations.

"the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." (Numbers 12:3)

Meekness is a self-control quality that Christians are instructed to learn and develop, not just for the interim, but for the powers and responsibilities that await them

Meekness is the opposite of selfish ambition

A meek man is 'a person who viewed his own role in relation to God as that of a servant and who thus quietly and gently subjected himself to God's will

There is a total absence of pride and a total dependence on God present. Our only hope is God!

Excuse others, be angry only with ourselves

James 1:19 - be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; (?)

Phil 4:5 – If the Lord is near, it is important for others to see us in meekness

Perhaps the most difficult right to yield is the right of making final decisions. Without yielding this right to God, we will never experience God's full potential for our lives. When Christ was on earth, He made no decisions on His own but did only that which was directed by His Heavenly Father. His continual attitude was "Not my will, but Thine be done." Once we have that same attitude, it is then possible for God to accomplish His will through our lives. If we have the attitude that says, "I will do this no matter what God says," then we are not following the example of Christ but of Satan. Isaiah 14 describes the fall of Satan and it reveals his attitude of pride and rebellion (v.v.12-14). Satan says, "I will...." The Lord Jesus says, "Father, not My will, but Thine be done." If we want to live for God and be used by Him to make an impact upon this generation for Jesus Christ, then it is so important that we allow Him to make the decisions in our lives. Who's authority are you submitted to? Are you controlled by the Holy Spirit? Have you ever yielded your rights to God?

Psalm 25:9. It says, "The meek will He guide in judgment; the meek will He teach His way." Are you willing to be taught? Are you willing to be guided and judged by Christ?

Matthew 5:5

James 1:19 - be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; (?)

Phil 4:5 – If the Lord is near, it is important for others to see us in meekness

we will not be bitter, but realize that **God meant it for our good.**

A meek man is 'a person who viewed his own role in relation to God as that of a servant and who thus quietly and gently subjected himself to God's will

There is a total absence of pride and a total dependence on God present. **Our only hope is God!**

Phil 2 ? – Jesus yields his rights to provide salvation

Some of the rights we must surrender to the Lord

Our Body (Romans 12:1-2; Mark 14:36)

Our Time (Matthew 6:33)

Our Health (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Our Possessions (Job 1:21)

Our Talents (1 Corinthians 4:7)

Our Family & Friends (Matthew 10:37,40)

Our Reputation (Philippians 2:3-11; John 3:30)

Our Future (Matthew 6:34)

Give the Lord the first part of your day by spending it alone with Him in His Word

-

Give the Lord the first ten percent (tithe) from your income

to Parents

-

Making my own wishes secondary to the instructions and wishes of my parents

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Purpose to obtain your parents' blessing before marriage

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Refuse to grumble and complain about restrictions your parents place on you

to your Employers

- Follow your employer's instructions without insisting that things be done YOUR way
- Refuse to get angry or upset when someone else is promoted over you

to your Church Leaders

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Avoid disagreeing with your pastor or church leaders in public

A calm temper of mind, not easily provoked #Jas 3:13

1. Peculiar promises are made to the meek #Mt 5:5 Isa 66:2
2. The cultivation of this spirit is enjoined #Col 3:12 1Ti 6:11 #Zep 2:3
3. Is exemplified
 - a. in Christ #Mt 11:29
 - b. Abraham #Ge 13:1 #Ge 16:5,6
 - c. Moses #Nu 12:3
 - d. David 2Sa 16:10,12
 - e. Paul #1Co 9:19

4) SAINTS SHOULD

- 4a) Seek # Zep 2:3
- 4b) Put on # Col 3:12-13
- 4c) Receive the word of God with # Jas 1:21
- 4d) Exhibit, in conduct, &c # Jas 3:13
- 4e) Answer for their hope with # 1Pe 3:15
- 4f) Show to all men # Tit 3:2
- 4g) Restore the erring with # Ga 6:1

5) Precious in the sight of God # 1Pe 3:4

6) MINISTERS SHOULD

- 6a) Follow after # 1Ti 6:11
- 6b) Instruct opposers with # 2Ti 2:24,25
- 6c) Urge, on their people # Tit 3:1,2

7) A characteristic of wisdom # Jas 3:17

8) Necessary to a Christian walk # Eph 4:1,2 1Co 6:7

9) THOSE WHO ARE GIFTED WITH

- 9a) Are preserved # Ps 76:9
- 9b) Are exalted # Ps 147:6 Mt 23:12
- 9c) Are guided and taught # Ps 25:9
- 9d) Are richly provided for # Ps 22:26
- 9e) Are beautified with salvation # Ps 149:4
- 9f) Increase their joy # Isa 29:19
- 9g) Shall inherit the earth # Ps 37:11

10) The gospel to be preached to those who possess # Isa 61:1

11) Blessedness of # Mt 5:5

12) Exemplified

12a) Moses # Nu 12:3

12b) David # 1Sa 30:6 2Sa 16:9-12

12c) Paul # 1Co 4:12 1Th 2:7

How Jesus Demonstrated Meekness (Philippians 2:5-8)

- 1. Christ yielded His right to wealth**
- 2. Christ yielded His right to a good reputation**
- 3. Christ yielded His right to be served**
- 4. Christ yielded His right to physical comforts**
- 5. Christ yielded His right to make His Own decisions**

the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest....it is not occupied with self at all.

In the hearts of the meek the Lord finds rest, but a turbulent soul is a seat of the devil. St. John Climacus,

one of the crucial aspects of meekness is teachability.

It is not spiritless, tamely submissive, spineless or wimpy.

Mild of temper, not easily provoked, and patient under injury. When Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, He said, "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." I wonder how many of my listeners have ever tried to rejoice and be glad when people have insulted them and persecuted them and said false things about them.

Our natural reaction to being mistreated is anger. But when we give place to anger, then we are creating further ugliness and disharmony. Meekness is more than self-control, which can be hardness. True meekness is lovingkindness. Meekness rejects every impulse of brutality.

My job is to reject my impulse to be brutal toward this person who has mistreated me. Instead of that, I need to learn to wait on God

Speak softly but carry a big stick – implies that there is power behind your soft spokenness. When we are meek, there is power behind our appearance of acceptance of our situation – that is that God is in charge.