



*God Is Government  
Isaiah 33:22  
“For the LORD is our judge, the  
LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD  
is our king; he will save us.”*

**TEACHINGS OF YESHUA HAMASHIACH**  
BIBLICAL AND WORLD HISTORY MASTERCLASS

**WALKING WORTHY OF YOUR CALLING**

# WALKING WORTHY OF YOUR CALLING

*“1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”*

- Ephesians 4:1-6

## Walking Worthy of Your Calling

The first three chapters of Ephesians, dealing with our position, and now the last three with our walk. And Paul introduces that at the opening of this chapter.

Paul begins, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation to which ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” This great text on the worthy walk really deserves our diligent, faithful study, because it reveals a basic truth that we need to consider. This is it: the Christian life is not a matter of what you do, first; it is a matter who you are. That’s the heart of it all.

And you’ll notice here that Paul says, “Walk worthy.” And walking, as we’ve been saying, is the idea of daily conduct. It’s the idea of daily living. It’s the idea of daily life: what you do, how you live. But it’s most interesting to me that when he says, “Walk worthy; here’s how,” he never discusses an action. He never discusses work, and he never discusses deed. All he ever discusses is an attitude. Because the worthy walk is not so much a matter of what you do as it is of what you are. There are plenty of people who can do the deeds and not be the person. That’s the hypocrisy that the Bible talks about.

It is possible to have what I call action fruit. The action fruit, the fruit of the lips, praise in Hebrews. The fruit of unselfishness, giving, Philippians 4. The fruit of Romans 1, winning someone to Christ. The fruit of Colossians, all good works. It’s possible to have the action fruit without the attitude fruit. You know what the attitude fruit is? The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control. That’s attitude fruit.

Now watch. If you have action fruit without attitude fruit, that’s legalism. If you have action fruit, first of all—love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control—it produces action fruit; that’s true spirituality.

And so, when God talks about the worthy walk, it doesn’t begin with the action. That’s going to come later in the chapter. It begins with the attitude. You understand that? Our Christian

life works this way: it starts with the Holy Spirit. He works through the attitude, and the attitude produces the action.

So, what happens? Walk worthy. What does that mean, Paul? It means lowliness, meekness, long suffering, forbearing love, and endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit. Those are all attitudes. Those are all inner graces.

You know, for many Christians, they miss this altogether. For many Christians, really, walking the Christian walk, really living the Christian life means going to church, or putting money in the offering, or owning and even occasionally reading a Bible, or not swearing, or not drinking, or not committing a crime or whatever. And we—there are many people who see that external definition of prescription behavior as the fact of Christianity, when that is simply the manifestation of it.

The biblical issue is not what we do apart from what we are. It is what we are that results in what we do. And that's what God is after. So, Paul says, "Walk worthy," and he is speaking then immediately after that of the attitudes that make it possible.

Now, to give you the outline that we started with here, the first verse we call the call to the worthy walk. In verse 1, Paul simply gives an exhortation based on the first three chapters, calling us to walk worthy. Then, in verses 2 and 3, we have the characteristics of the worthy walk. If we are to walk worthy, what are the characteristics? How does it manifest itself? And here he gives give inner attitudes. Then he closes in verses 4 to 6 this opening session with the cause of the worthy walk. The call, the characteristics, and the cause of the worthy walk.

Now, what have we found? We've looked at the call to the worthy walk and seen that its urgency is based upon who we are. "Therefore" in verse 1. We've then looked at the characteristics of the worthy walk, verses 2 and 3. And I told you there are five inner graces that will manifest a worthy life. Five things that lead us to walk worthy.

The first one we discussed in our last two sessions was "all lowliness," verse 2. All lowliness. And we said that means total humility. The worthy walk begins with total humility. We said that total humility is the absence of self, the absence of selfishness. It's the bottom line on Christian living. It's the bottom line on walking worthy. And I told you last week—you

remember? —about all the ways that Satan tempts us to be proud, and how we must resist in all those areas.

You know, I—you remember when I was talking about the one of spiritual pride, and I said you could come to Grace Church, and if you had a New American Standard Bible with tabs in it, and a little red notebook, you could play the part? Well, you know, I didn't want you to misunderstand that. I was afraid there'd be a big rush on King James Bibles and brown notebooks in the bookstore so nobody could be accused of being a hypocrite. That wasn't the point. I'm not accusing people of being hypocrites for doing that. I'm saying it's easy for someone to kind of parade a little bit if there are certain little ways they can sort of don the attire.

By the way, I have to share this letter with you. Somebody, apparently responding to that very statement—I don't know if I said it in both services, but I made the statement, you know, you could pretend to be spiritual if you just had the right Bible and the right notebook and looked like you really were involved. And it could be that that was purely external. And that's true. Now, I'm not saying that when you do that that it is external; I'm just saying it's possible that it could be.

And so, someone wrote me a letter, and this is what it says, “Dear, John, the Bible I have before me is a precious gift from my daughter, less than three years ago, just before I understood and deeply committed my life to our Lord Jesus Christ. The cover has been handmade in leather. There is a personal touch of love in this gift that is very special to me. Inside, stuffed into its torn binding, there are written personal and precious thoughts the Lord and I have shared together. Some pages and books are so marked with tender notations of awesome awareness, seen for the very first time, that the Word itself is difficult to see.

“Written on the inside cover are names and dates of seven family members who have new life in Christ Jesus. There are tearstains wrinkling the pages of Scripture where He has gently exposed still another of my sins, where His incredible love has restored me again.

“My Bible is the New American Standard, now that I look at it. It is the larger size. Sometimes it is awkward, heavy, and makes creases in my dress, but it never seems to matter; it mirrors my dearest friend. Oh, yes, John, it has tabs, too. How else could I hope to stay

with you? Everything about the Bible is new to me. It is important to me that I turn with you to every Scripture. If what you're teaching is what God has said, it doesn't matter so much that I understand it all at that moment; the important fact is that it strengthens my faith in God and in you as my teacher.

“Among these treasures, too, is a little red Grace notebook. It contains notes that refresh my memory as I reread the Scripture. These notes represent hours and hours of your dedication to our Lord God Himself, His Church, Grace family. There are expressions of deep concern for all people. There is evident always the love you have for your wife and children. Your careful study leads those of us yet babes along a straight, lighted path of understanding His Word.

“Am I to be marked with spiritual pride because I carry these aids to my learning? I come as a little child before God, before you, eager, enthusiastic, ready to be taught. This could become a stumbling block to me, risking the impression that these implements of learning will be seen as spiritual pride, or will they just label me a new Christian, not yet fundamentally able or rooted sufficiently to come to church not needing such crutches.

“Thank God for the clear teaching, John. I'm still here, learning from you—big, New American Standard Bible with tabs in hand—confident my Lord knows my heart and that I am seeking first His kingdom.” And it's unsigned.

Let's go to the second word here in verse 2, “With all lowliness and meekness.” Humility produces meekness. These five virtues are progressive. One produces the other. You cannot have meekness without humility. There's no such combination as pride and meekness. Meekness does not go along with pride. They are mutually exclusive. Meekness is a byproduct of humility. Where there is humility, there will inevitably be meekness; where there is meekness, there will be long suffering; where there is long suffering, there will be forbearing one another in love; and where those occur, there will be the keeping of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This is a progressive thing. This is moving to the goal.

So, we see, then, that he calls us to meekness. If we are to walk worthy as the exalted sons of the King, if we are to walk worthy as children of God, as heirs of the kingdom, as inheritors of all the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies forever, we are to do that in meekness.

What is meekness? It's interesting how the world defines it, because the world doesn't understand it. The dictionary said meekness is a deficiency in courage or a deficiency of spirit. And, you see, humanly speaking, meekness comes out that way.

Now, if you look at Galatians 5, you see that meekness is the fruit of the Spirit. When true meekness is produced by the Spirit of God, it is a—it is a valuable virtue; it is a critical virtue. But the attitude of human meekness, apart from the energy of the Holy Spirit, is seen by the world as cowardice or timidity, or lack of strength. But that's not the Bible term.

Let's talk about what it means. If I am to be meek—listen, beloved, you can't even walk the worthy walk without humility. And you cannot walk the worthy walk without meekness, so, you better learn what meekness is. So, we're going to take the time this morning to see.

Meekness, *prautēs* from the form *praus*; *praus* is the word "meekness." It refers basically to something that is mild and gentle. It means to be gentle-hearted. Mild. The opposite of a person who is vengeful, who seeks revenge, or who seeks retaliation, or who seeks vindictiveness, or who harbors bitterness or resentment, or reacts against others.

In fact, it is a—it is the opposite of vengeance. It is often defined that way, as the opposite of vengeance, or the opposite of violence. We might say it is a quiet, willing, submission to God; a quiet, willing, submission to others without the rebellion and the revenge and the retaliation and the self-assertion that characterizes a natural man.

Now, let me get into the definition a little further. It is a mild, gentle, non-retaliating, non-vindictive, non-vengeful, non-violent spirit. It is used in secular language in several ways. In some of the ancient Greek sources, it is used to speak of a soothing medicine like a tranquilizer. It is—it is used to speak to speak of something that calms and soothes the spirit. It is used also of a gentle breeze, the light, cool breeze that would waft across the warm hillside and cool the people there. It is used also to speak of a broken-down who is now tame and docile, and whose power and energy can be channeled for purposes of benefit.

So, it is a word that speaks of gentleness, of a soothing, of a calming kind of thing. The secular Greeks use it for people who they said were friendly, or tenderhearted, or pleasant, or mild, or gentle as opposed to hard, rough, coarse violence. It's a sense of quietness.

It is characteristic, most of all, of Jesus Christ. In 2 Corinthians 10:1, Paul spoke of the meekness of Christ. In Matthew 11:29, Jesus said, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” He came riding on the colt, the foal of an ass, not a great white steed with a fanfare, but meekly, quietly riding on the colt, the foal of an ass, the dumbest beast of burden, the most common animal, emphasizing His meekness. Christ was meek. It is a godly characteristic. In fact, in Zephaniah chapter 2, verse 3, the Holy Spirit says, “Seek meekness.” Seek meekness. Now the term is used at least twelve times in the New Testament, *prautēs*. Meekness, as a virtue, is extolled in the New Testament. We could call your attention to Galatians 5:23, the fruit of the Spirit, meekness.

In 1 Timothy, we find a wonderful insight, “But thou, O man of God”—if you’re to be a real man of God—and here again it’s almost like the worthy walk, if you’re to really live the life, it says—“follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.” But I think it’s so important to add this, meekness doesn’t mean you’re a coward, because the very next sentence says, “Fight the good fight of faith.” Listen, a meek person is anything but a coward. A meek person will fight at the drop of a hat over the right cause. A meek person even gets mad; he gets angry; he gets hot; he gets indignant over the right cause. Meekness is a mild, quiet, gentle, pleasant spirit. It is a soothing, non-vengeful, non-retaliating, non-vindictive, non-bitter, non-reacting, non-defensive, non-self-assertive spirit, except when it ought to get angry, and then meekness really gets hot. And I’ll show you when that is in a few moments.

The word is also used in James chapter 3 and verse 13, “Who is a wise man and endowed with knowledge among you?” Who’s really wise?

You say, “The man with the PhD.”

No.

“Or the man who’s studied all the books.”

No. A wise man, a man with real knowledge—“Let him show it out of a good life his words with meekness.” It’s the meekness; he’s the wise one, the one who is meek. “The wisdom

that is from above”—verse 17 says—“is first pure, then peaceable, meek, easy to be entreated.”

So, meekness is a virtue extolled over and over and over in the New Testament. It is not an absence of anger, not at all. Because he says in one time meekness, and turns right around the next phrase and says, “Fight the good fight of faith.” It fights. Meekness fights. But watch this. Meekness, we could say, is power under control. Power under control.

When you have humility—now watch—humility is self-emptying. True humility divests me of myself. I’m not interested in my own causes. I’m not interested in my own successes. I’m not interested in my own fame. I’m not interested in my own gain. I’m not interested in my own reputation. I have divested myself. Then meekness is a byproduct. It is a byproduct of a broken will, of a brokenness before God.

But it is not the destruction of the lion; it is the taming of the lion. You understand that? It is not the destruction of the lion, but the taming of the lion. All of his strength is there. All of his power is there. All of his energy is there. All of his potential is there but it is at the control of the master. Quite a different thing to seeing a lion running free in the continent of Africa, than seeing a lion under the control of a lion tamer at the circus. That lion with all the same ferocity, the same energy, the same will, the same power, the same strength, but always under the control of the master. And so, it is with meekness. No longer does the lion in you and the lion in me seek its own gain. No longer does it seek its own prey. No longer does it seek its own causes. No longer does it run free to accomplish its own ends, but it is submissive to the control of the master. It is not losing its power; it is harnessing its power.

The same is true of the illustration in the secular Greek of the horse. As long as the colt runs wild and free, its power is out of control, and it serves no ends. When its power is brought under control, it can be used for gainful purposes.

When the wind blows in a hurricane force, it has no function but to destroy. But when it blows in a quiet breeze, it catches the windmill, and the windmill pumps the water that causes the crop to be watered that feeds the masses of humanity.



And so it is that when power is under control, it is useful. And there is within the heart of the believer a lion. And that lion has every right to roar. And that lion has every right to react. And that lion has every right to pounce, but not on those things at its own discretion, but only under the direction of the one who rules its will, the Master, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

Don't you think for a moment that meekness is indifference, or cowardice, or weakness, or fearfulness. It is not. It is not impotent. It is not cowardly. Jesus was not impotent and nor was He cowardly, but Jesus was meek.

Let me tell you something. Did you know that you have the right to get mad? That's right; you have every right to be angry. In fact, in Ephesians 4:26, it says, "Be ye angry"—you ever know that? Now, be sure you quote the rest of verse—"and sin not." It's all right to be angry, but not to sin, which says there's a certain kind of anger that isn't sin. Right? There is an anger that is not sin.

You say, "What anger is that?"

It is the right kind of anger, being angry for the right reason. You can be angry for the right reason or the wrong reason. In one case it's power under control, and in another case it's power out of control. The Bible knows about these two options. In fact, in Proverbs chapter 25 and verse 28, we read about power out of control. Proverbs 25:28 says this, "He that has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls."

Here is a totally out of control spirit. Out of control and consequently vulnerable, falls into every pit, every temptation, every failure, every weakness. He has no self-control. He has no rule over his own spirit. That's anger out of control, power out of control, not meekness.

On the other hand, backing up in Proverbs to the sixteenth chapter, the thirty-second verse, it says this, "He who rules his spirit is better than he that takes a city. So, Proverbs 16 is a person who rules his spirit. In other words, the spirit is there, the power is there, the lion is there, the energy is there, the potential is there, but it's under control.

On the other hand, the same power, the same energy, the same strength out of control creates nothing but chaos and sinfulness. People who get angry at everything, out of control, know

nothing of meekness. Meek people control their energies, control their strengths; they control the lion in them so that It only pounces when it should; it only roars when it should.

Now, let me give you some further things before we get into biblical pictures. When Aristotle discussed these things, he gave us some very helpful definitions of the words in his day that help us to know what the Bible word means. In writing *Ethics*, his work on ethics, he talked about this. For Aristotle—this is what he believed—the virtues of life, those are the good things—the virtues, the right attitudes of life—were defined as the middle, between the excess and the deficiency. On this side is the absence of something. Over here is the excess of it, and the virtue is in the middle.

And he went on to give many illustrations of that. For example, Aristotle said this, “Courage is the virtue in the middle between cowardice, which is the deficiency of courage, and foolhardiness, which is the excess of courage. In other words, a person who is too courageous is going to get himself killed; it’s foolishness. A person who has no courage is nothing but a sniveling coward. The virtue is in the middle.

Aristotle said generosity, for example, is a virtue. It is the virtue between stingy selfishness and wastefulness. Generosity is the virtue in the middle. Then Aristotle said meekness is the virtue in the middle between indifference, unconcern, weakness, cowardice, and excessive, explosive anger. Meekness is in the middle.

Aristotle said, and I quote, “The meek man is angry on the right occasion, with the right people, at the right moment, and for the right length of time.” End quote. Power under control. It’s not a passive...You say, “Oh, I’m meek, so, I just—I can’t certainly get into that. I know it’s an awful thing, and those people have sinned, and here’s many evil practices, but I—my meekness refrains me from speaking.”

That’s not meekness; that’s just stupidity. Meekness doesn’t make you back away from sin. It doesn’t make you cease to condemn evil. Now watch. It is anger under control. Now under the control of whom? God. Meekness is when I take the lion in me and submit it to God so that it only gets angry about that which offends God, not me. Do you see it? The lion roars in defense of God, not in defense of me. If somebody wants to step on me, that’s all right. If

somebody offends me, that's all right. If somebody does something to me, that's all right. There is no retaliation; there is no revenge; there is no self-seeking.

As John Bunyan said, "He who is already lying down needs fear no fall." There's nowhere to fall. I'm already there. I seek nothing for myself. But the lion roars in me when God is maligned. You see? That's holy indignation. That's righteous indignation. And I want you to understand that meekness is that quiet spirit that is non-defensive, non-retaliating, non-vengeful, non-self-seeking. But when God is dishonored, that same spirit stands up and roars and exercises its power. It is a holy indignation under the control of God. It reacts when it ought to react, at the right time, for the right reasons, and for the right length of time.

Jesus had it. Jesus who said, "I am meek and lowly at heart." Jesus of whom it was said He came riding on the colt, the foal of an ass, meek and lowly, Zechariah 9:9. He would come so meek. Jesus who seemed so quiet, who avoided the conflict so often. Jesus of whom blessed Peter said, when He was reviled, he reviled not again, and when He was persecuted, He did not retaliate or seek revenge. Jesus, that quiet and meek spirit; the same Jesus who when God the Father was dishonored, walked into the temple, made a whip and started whipping men in the back, and started throwing tables over and knocking over chairs, and spilling money, and chasing animals, and said, "Get out of here; you have turned My Father's house into a den of thieves, and it is to be a house of prayer." The same Jesus, meek and quiet spirit in dealing with people, who when He confronted the filthy hypocrisy of the Pharisees, blistered them from one side to the other and called them whited sepulchers, whitewashed on the outside, and inside full of dead men's bones.

Listen, this is the same meek and lowly Jesus. Watch it, the key is this: Jesus never spoke a vengeful word, or a retaliating word, or a word of condemnation or judgment against anyone for something they had done to Him. He spoke it only in reference to how they treated God, and He set an example.

Peter says in 1 Peter 2, "Christ has suffered, setting an example for us." And what is the example? That, "when He was reviled, He reviled not again." When He was condemned, He did not become vengeful.

Now you see Him with a whip in the temple, and He's cleaning the temple because it is a defiling of the Father's house. But when His own temple was defiled, hanging on the cross, and the nails were driven through, and His body was dripping with blood and spit and sweat, and they were mocking Him, all He had to say to them then was, "Father"—what?—"forgive them; they don't know what they do." See? That's meekness. That's power under control. It's total selflessness. Jesus never reacted to that which came against him, only that which came against the Father.

In the garden, they came to capture Him, in Matthew chapter 26. It would have been so easy for Jesus to have pulled off a wonder of all wonders. It says that He had the power, if He wished, to call the angels of heaven to His aid. Jesus said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?" Conservatively speaking, nearly 100,000, 75,000 angels. You know how powerful that is? Well, look at the Old Testament. One angel slew 185,000 Assyrians. Listen, Jesus said, "I could, with one word to My Father, have 12 legions of angels here in a snap." But not in defense of Himself; He wouldn't do it. Not in defense of Himself. That's meekness.

Meekness will take a whip and defend God against those who desecrate His name. It'll be angry. It'll be so angry that its eyes will be fire. But meekness will not as much as lift its own finger for vengeance against that which comes to itself.

You know, it's so easy to be tempted this way. When somebody says something about me that's critical or something, you know, you feel that inside temptation, "Boy, you know, I'll tell them. Who do they think they are touching God's anointed?" You know? "Hey, you get..." See? Or when somebody does something to you. You know, people keep running into our cars lately. You know, your first reaction is, "Boy, I'm going to get every penny out of that bird." See? That's what you start to feel inside. And you need to say, "That's not the thing to be angry about. Not what my neighbor does to me."

What happens to me doesn't matter. Meekness says I only retaliate—the lion only roars when God is the issue. See? Boy, that's when you're living right. You can't be offended. Meekness cannot be offended. Do you get that? There's nothing to defend, because we're nothing.

Another illustration of meekness is power under control would be David. In 1 Samuel 24—you don't need to turn to it; I'll just wrap these thoughts up—in 1 Samuel 24, David was running from Saul. Remember that? Saul was chasing David. David knew he was king. He was an anointed king. I mean he knew he was to be the king. And Saul was a rotten king, and it was only a matter of time; it was inevitable.

And David and his men were hiding in a cave. Remember the story? And in 1 Samuel 24, Saul came in their cave. What an opportunity. You could pull off a coup rather easily. One shot in the old heart and that was it. David knew he had the right to reign. David knew that Saul had chased him all over the place, tried to kill him, tried to destroy the wonderful love relationship he had with Jonathan, tried to devastate his whole life.

You know, normally, a man would have been so vengeful to Saul, have hated what Saul did to him, make him run like an animal all over the wilderness, that he would have taken that opportunity and figure he had every right of God. He would have said, "Boy, God, you must have put him in here. I'm going to get him while I got him."

And David's men said to him, "Do it, David, do it." But David wouldn't do it. David went over to Saul, took his knife, and cut a piece of his robe off just so Saul would know he was there and could have done it, but didn't do it. He had the power. He had the right. But his power was under the control of submission to God. He would never do anything in vengeance for himself; only would he defend God. And in Psalm 69:9, David said, "Zeal for Your house has eaten me up. He reproaches that have fallen on You are fallen on me." He says, "God, when I get angry, it's because You are dishonored." He never defended himself.

In 2 Samuel 16, David's son Absalom—that evil, rebellious, vile son—tried to defeat his own father as king. And David had to run for his life. And David is running for his life out in the wilderness. And Absalom is trying to put up a new government and undermine his own father. And David was the laughingstock of some people because he ran from his own son.

And during that time, one of Saul's men by the name of Shimei found David, and he started to curse at David. And he mocked David, and he threw rocks at him. David was the king, God's anointed. But he was so humbled by this, that this man was cursing him and mocking him and throwing pebbles at him.

And Abishai, David's nephew, said to David, "David, you just tell me the word and I'll chop his head off."

David said, "Let him alone." That's power under control. Never vengeful for himself, sought nothing for himself. He would act with his army to fight for God's causes. He wouldn't touch one person for his own sake. Not one. That's meekness. Now, you know as well as I do that Saul would have killed this guy—Shimei—if he had been throwing rocks at him. The difference is this: they both had power. One had it under control; one had it out of control. One was like a fortified city, according to Proverbs; one was like one with no walls. That's meekness.

You know, at one time, Saul was—Saul was so out of control at one time, according to 1 Samuel 14, Saul was going to kill his own son on a minor issue, just to prove his power. On the other hand, when David's son rebelled against him, David said he would rather die for Absalom's sake, 2 Samuel 18:33. That's the difference. Saul wouldn't let himself be offended by anybody, even his own son. He'd kill him first. David could be offended by everybody, even his own son, and lose his own life first. That's the difference. Power under control, the spirit that makes a man bow low before God and think nothing of himself.

The greatest Old Testament illustration of meekness is Moses. And I want you to see this as we wrap up our thoughts. Moses. Listen to this statement. I'm going to read it to you, Numbers 12:3. You don't need to turn to it, just listen. Numbers 12:3 says, "The man Moses was very meek, above all the men who were on the face of the earth." End quote. Isn't that great? The meekest man that ever lived. He was meek.

Now, when you think of Moses, you don't think of Caspar Milquetoast. You don't think of some puny, little character going around, mumbling under his beard. You think of fearlessness; you think of boldness; you think of combativeness. You think of a confrontive, courageous man with conviction; of a great, dynamic, powerful leader. You see that man with explosions of anger from one end of his career to the other, don't you? Why his whole career came when he saw an Egyptian person abusing a Jew, and he killed him. Remember that? He blew up at him and he just took his life he was so furious.

You see him in the fifth chapter of Exodus, after he's been refined by God in the wilderness, and he walks right in there, into the presence of Pharaoh, the greatest monarch existent in the world. He faces Pharaoh face to face, looks him in the eye, and says, "Pharaoh, let my people go." And he wasn't afraid to face him, and he wasn't afraid to command him, and he wasn't afraid to make a demand. Godly fearlessness, godly boldness.

In Exodus chapter 32, he finds Israel in idolatry. He finds them in debauchery. And in absolute fury, he smashes the Law of God. And he scathes and rebukes. Fearless man. Bold, combative, confrontive. We see him in the outburst of righteous anger. Certainly not timid cowardice.

Listen, Moses was fearless. He took the life of an Egyptian. He was fearless in confronting Pharaoh. He was fearless in confronting the people of God in their sin. He went through his life exercising authority over a couple of million people. He was a bold, strong man. Yet the Bible said he was the meekest man that ever lived. Why? Because his strength was always amassed in reaction to God's honor, never in defense of himself. Do you see? In fact, he had no confidence in himself. None at all. In the third chapter of Exodus, when God came to him and called him, he said, "Who am I that I should lead this people? Who am I?"

And in Exodus chapter 4, God says, "You can't, but I can." And He gave Him a rod. And He had the rod of God in His hand, and he was nothing, but the rod of God was everything. And from that time on, the rod of God was always in his hand, and when he does something with the rod, things happen. Right? It was like a constant symbol of the fact that Moses was nothing, and the rod was everything.

Paul was somewhat the same way. Paul said in Philippians 3:3, "I cannot trust the flesh." But he said in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." He was saying what Moses said, "I can't but You can." Listen, meekness never reacts for its own sake but only for God. Paul never defended himself. Paul never rebuked anybody for what they did to him. He never retaliated. He never fired back in vengeance; only when God was dishonored.

And so, it was with Moses. And so it was, most of all, with Jesus Christ. And He did it as an example to us. It is His meekness that we must emulate.

Let me ask you some questions in closing. How do you know if you're meek? How do you know if you're meek? I'll give you some practical questions. Ask yourself this: do you experience self-control? That's question number one. Is your anger, your power, your energy always under control? Proverbs 16:32. Do you rule your own spirit, or do you find yourself being victimized by flying off the handle? "Boy, he can't do that to me. Who does that guy think he is? When your wife says something to you that could start an argument, do you get right in there, defending yourself? "You're wrong, I'm telling you. It was not my fault." And you come right back. Are you always under control? A meek person? Power under control? The only time the lion roars is in defense of God.

"Rather," says Paul in 1 Corinthians, "suffer wrong." Suffering wrong. Take it. Second question, are you angry only when God is dishonored? Are you angry only when God is dishonored? No other time?

You know, I get angry. I mean I get hot angrily sometimes. People who know me know that. I get really angry. But, you know, the things that make me angry are the things that dishonor God, that mar His reputation, that despise His name. That's what makes me angry. I get angry over sin. I get angry over perversion of the Word of God. I get angry over false doctrines. I get angry over false teachers. I get angry over those who would claim to know Christ and do not. I get angry over those kinds of things. I get angry.

Now, we ought to be careful that we exhort those who oppose us in love and in meekness. But we have every right for the lion to roar when God is dishonored.

Third question, do you respond to the Word of God humbly, no matter what it says? James 1:21 says you are to receive the engrafted Word with meekness. Do you respond to the Word of God meekly, saying, "If that's what it says, I submit; I obey"? So, do you experience self-control? Are you angry only when God is dishonored? Do you respond to the Word of God humbly?

A fourth question, do you always make peace? Meek people do. They always make peace. Right here it says, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace." That's what meekness will do. If somebody falls, do you condemn them, gossip about them, talk



about them? If they do something wrong, do you talk about it under the guise of, “We’ve got to discuss this spiritual problem”? Or are you the one who says, in Galatian 6, when a brother is taken in a fault, you restore such a one with meekness? Uh-huh. That’s what you have to do. Are you a peacemaker? Meek people are. They don’t fight; they end them. They don’t start arguments; they finish them.

Another question, do you receive criticism without retaliation, whether it’s right or wrong? Do you receive criticism without retaliation whether it’s right or wrong? Boy, this is a practical lesson. I work on this one hard. Somebody writes to me and just lets me have it up one side and down the other. The Spirit is teaching me to write back and say, “Thank you for your criticism. I know God will use it in my life. Pray for me. God love you.” And sign my name. Can you take criticism whether it’s right or wrong? Without retaliation?

Another question, a final one. Do you have the right attitude toward the unsaved? You know, Peter says we are to give an answer to every man that asks us the reason of the hope within us with meekness and fear. You know what he means? It’s so easy for Christians to get smug, lofty, think we’ve arrived. And you start thinking about sinners as if they are, “What? What do they know? Stupid people.” And you begin to look down on them. You are proud. And you get kind of defensive, “Doesn’t he know I’m a child of God? He can’t treat me like that.” On the other hand, it is meek.

Those are some questions that might help you do you have self-control? Are you angry only when God is dishonored? Do you respond to the Word humbly no matter what it says? Do you always make peace? Do you receive criticism without retaliation, whether it’s right or wrong? Do you have the right attitude toward the unsaved? Do you look at them and say, “Oh, God, they’re probably better than I, that I should be saved”? That’s what meekness says.

Listen, Lloyd Jones says, “To be meek means you have finished with yourself altogether.” Nobody can harm you anymore because you’re not important. The worst men could say of you is probably true. And most significantly, beloved, this is how Christ was.

Listen, the one who made the world, the one who flung the billion galaxies into space, the one who calls every star by name, the one who preserves the innumerable orbits in their courses, the one who weighs the mountains in a balance and the hills in a scale, the one who

takes up the islands as a very small thing, the one who holds the waters in the hollow of His hand, the one before whom the inhabitants of the world are as grasshoppers—this one says, “I am meek and lowly.” Can you do less?

And so, Peter says in 1 Peter 3:4 that we are to be adorned with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great value. Humility leads to meekness. Next time we’ll see what meekness leads to.