



[Galatians 5:23](#)

(23) gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

New International Version

Contrary to popular belief, the meek (*gentle*, NKJV) do not take everything "lying down." Notice [Moses](#), who was the meekest man of his time (see [Numbers 12:3](#)). He did not hesitate to order the execution of about three thousand of the idolaters who worshipped the Golden Calf while he was with [God](#) on the mountain ([Exodus 32:25-28](#)). Against evil this meek man was as stern as steel. How a meek man reacts depends upon what he discerns God's will is for him within the circumstance. Because the meek man sets his mind on God's purpose and not his own comfort, ambition, or reputation, he will offer implacable resistance to evil in defense of God yet react with [patience](#), [kindness](#), and gentleness when others attack him.

[Jesus](#) set a clear example of this pattern of reaction too. He made a whip of rope, and with stern and vehement energy, overturned the tables and drove the livestock, their sellers, and moneychangers from the Temple compound because they had turned God's house into a common bazaar by their sacrilege. With simple, forthright, firm, instructive answers and incisive questions, He met the twisted, intellectual, carnal reasoning of the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees. Yet as [Matthew 12:19-20](#) reads, "He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench." Peter adds:

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: "who committed no [sin](#), nor was guile found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously. ([I Peter 2:21-23](#))

A meek person will feel the wrong done against him and feel it bitterly. But because he is not thinking of himself, his [meekness](#) does not allow his spirit to give vent to a hateful, savage, and vindictive anger that seeks to "get even." He will instead be full of pity for the damaged character, attitudes, and blindness of the perpetrator. From the stake Jesus uttered, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" ([Luke 23:34](#)). This virtue is a strong bulwark against self-righteousness and intolerant and critical judgment of others. Yet neither does it excuse or condone sin. Rather, a meek person understands it more clearly, thus his judgment is tempered, avoiding reacting more harshly than is necessary.

Paul writes in [Titus 3:1-2](#), "Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility [*meekness*, KJV] to all men." The possibility of conflict is inherent where the subject includes our relationship with governments; it is quite easy to have conflict with those in authority over us. Some in positions

of authority take pleasure in wielding their power, as Jesus notes in [Matthew 20:25](#): "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them."

On the flip side are those under authority, and this is where Paul's main emphasis is in Titus 3. Humans, by nature, tend to be very sensitive, critical, and harsh in their judgments of those over them. It frequently results in slanderous attacks and quarrels against those in authority—sometimes even in revolutions. Paul advises us to be non-belligerent, considerate, unassertive, and meek. If the fruit of meekness has been produced in either or both parties, [peace](#) and unity are more possible because a major tool is in place to allow both to perform their responsibilities within the relationship correctly.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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