



## [Galatians 5:23](#)

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

[Meekness](#) (*gentleness*, NKJV) is the by-product of a number of elements, not the least of which are deep, thorough humility and an awareness of the seriousness of what our past conduct produced, especially toward [Jesus Christ](#). These things have tamed the beast, broken our self-will, and made our minds receptive to the pure influences of [God's Spirit](#). This is not natural but supernatural, the product of God's [grace](#) toward us and His Spirit working and growing in us. It very deeply, sometimes radically, alters our perspective of [God](#), His purpose, the trials of life, the self, and other people.

This is very important regarding trials because meekness is the opposite of self-will toward God and of ill-will toward men. In his commentary on [Matthew 5:5](#), Matthew Henry writes, "The meek are those who quietly submit themselves to God, to his word and to his rod, who follow His directions, and comply with His designs, and are gentle towards all men" (p. 1629).

Meekness is the fruit of God by His Spirit working in us. Godly sorrow softens our stiff-necked rebellion and our hearts so that we are made receptive to the workings of the Creator to produce His image in us. Therefore meekness, along with the qualities already mentioned, also includes our becoming pliable, malleable, submissive, and teachable. A New Testament term for this condition might be "childlike."

God disciplines every son He loves ([Hebrews 12:6](#)), and sometimes His disciplines are very difficult to bear. We have passionate drives within us to flee from them, or at the very least, to grumble and murmur under their burden. But the meek will not do this. They will endure the privation, embarrassment, pain, loss, ignorance, or [persecution](#) with quiet [patience](#) because they know that God is sovereign over all and He is working in their lives.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Galatians 5:23 (<http://www.theberean.org>)  
Aaron's response to God's execution of his two sons is an example:

Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. Then [Moses](#) said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying: 'By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified.'" So Aaron held his [peace](#). ([Leviticus 10:1-3](#))

This was a shocking, bitter pill to swallow, but Aaron took it properly, meekly. He was growing. In [Psalm 39:9](#), [David](#) refers to a difficult situation he was experiencing, leaving us this example: "I was mute, I did not open my mouth, because it was You who did it."

The supreme example of this is Jesus Christ, who endured horrific trials though He was the Son of [God's love](#). [John 18:11](#) says, "Then Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?'" [Acts 8:32](#) contains more insight on Christ's meek reaction: "He was led [not dragged] as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so He opened not His mouth." He was the very King of meekness.

Meekness enables a person to bear patiently those insults and injuries he receives at the hand of others. It makes him ready to accept instruction from the least of the saints. It allows him to endure provocation without being inflamed by it. He remains cool when others become heated. Meek people seek no private revenge; they leave that to God's sense of justice while they seek to remain true in their calling and meet God's standards.

The spirit of meekness enables its possessor to squeeze great enjoyment from his earthly portion, be it small or great. Delivered from a greedy and grasping disposition, he is satisfied with what he has. Contentment of mind is one of the fruits of meekness. The haughty and covetous do not inherit the earth. As [Psalm 37:16](#) says, "A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked."

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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