

## **Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.**

by Hendrik Joubert

Attempting to write something meaningful about the qualities *humility* and *meekness* is a challenge, partly because it often is associated with low self-esteem, and therefore to be avoided. Of *meekness* the ISBE reads: *The conception of meekness, as it had been defined by Aristotle, was raised by Christianity to a much higher level, and associated with the commonly despised quality of humility (see under the word).*

This statement reflects the dilemma; in what way is it *raised by Christianity to a much higher level*? Is it the quality in its pure form, or how we are to work with it – the spin we put on it? The Scriptures warns against one engaging in activities merely for the praise derived: ***These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence. (Colossians 2:23)***

Consider the Monks, the mother Teresas and those individuals who annually, around *Easter*, flog and *crucify* themselves to demonstrate their *humility* to *impress* the crowds. Would they engage in such *humble* behavior in private without the knowledge of the masses to do it *for the Lord*, as they claim?

Society fights the idea of putting oneself down, however there is a way to *raise* these concepts to a level where one may engage in them for religious purposes – only in the church environment. One of my brothers in the flesh has a rather humorous take on all this talk about how *I do not get angry easily, however when I do lose this meek spirit you do not want to mess with me... What a terrible thing it would be if we all get mad at the same time?* A lack of meekness and self-control is not something to boast about...

Meekness is demonstrated under stress, when we are *tested*. Consider the example of the Savior of the world; how He was treated and how He demonstrated meekness as He looked beyond His position in the universe, to the needs of those who treated Him worse than we will ever be. ***"Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."*** (Luke 23:34)

The apostle describes the Lord's attitude – to be emulated: ***Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,<sup>6</sup> who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,<sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.<sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5-8)***

There are so many simple ways we *lose it* as we express our frustration. We call this *venting*... It is an accepted psychological phenomenon...*do not hold your anger*

*in!* Why are we angry? Did someone else *draw first blood*? Are we now justified in expressing all that bottled up anger because we *acted* meek and humble in the past? Imagine Jesus on the cross... His greatness does not come only when others recognize it, He **is** Great because He **is** Great. Imagine the scene in **2Kings 6:17**: ***Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.*** Spend some time on this, and then consider the words of the Lord ***"Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26:53)*** If Jesus lost it...

If we cannot find it in ourselves to consider others as more important than ourselves as we observe the example of the Son of the Living God, consider the consequences. God will execute His revenge upon those who chose not to humble themselves before Him, but also express this selflessness toward others as we fail to value their souls more importantly than our ego. Are we able to apologize even for the times we are *perceived* to be in the wrong by others, even though we may consider their attitude as the real problem? *If I offended you, I apologize...* So we may remove stumbling blocks? Or will we apologize only if they will apologize? If a brother/sister apologizes, do we consider it a personal victory – an admission of our superiority?

It is the poor in spirit who will be quiet to learn of man's sinfulness. It is the poor in spirit who will be reduced to mourning as he realized his sinfulness. The little self claimed confidence will make place for meekness towards God and his fellow man as he realizes he is no better than they. Few people are quiet long enough for God to tell them what to do. They are too busy telling Him what they are going to do for Him.

If we will resist the pressure to conform to this world, and be transformed by renewing our thinking by studying and accepting God's ways, we will establish that the will of God is that which is good, acceptable and perfect. (**Romans 12:2**) We will learn that it is the way to live in this land, but more importantly we will we will inherit the true spiritual land where we will live with God eternally. This land promise to *fleshly* Israel is fulfilled in a spiritual way to the seed of Abraham by faith. (**Romans 4:16-18**)