

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Emerson Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Douglas' mother, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Kelly Hall, Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson, Lamar Mathis, Ms. Matchett, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mr. Sowder, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. Winns, Mrs. LeeAnn Wiser.
Out of Town: Dowlings.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website:
www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com.
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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The Fruit of the Spirit - Gentleness

By Derek Long

Gentleness is mentioned as the eight of the nine qualities listed in Galatians 5:22-23 as the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." Gentleness is also translated "meekness" in certain English translations of Galatians 5:22-23. Gentleness or meekness is sometimes a challenging quality to understand. It is hard to find a good English equivalent to express the exact meaning contained in the original Greek word. If we let the Bible teach us what it means by gentleness or meekness, we can get an accurate picture of how this quality should be manifested in the lives of Christians.

Meekness is displayed in the life of Moses. Numbers 12:3 says, "Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth." The King James Version translates the word "humble" as "meek." How does Moses display meekness in his life and thus teach us what this quality consists of? Moses at times would be angered by the sins of the children of Israel. Exodus 32:19 speaks about Moses' response to them building the golden calf. It says, "So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the

tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain.” Gentleness does not mean one overlooks sin or fails to respond with righteous indignation toward sin. Moses put up with the children of Israel’s complaints against him in the wilderness for several years. Numbers 12 is a time when Aaron and Miriam were complaining against Moses. Moses’ response was not to become upset, defensive, or seek to put Aaron and Miriam in their place. Moses instead humbly allowed God to vindicate him.

Jesus is a great example of One who is gentle or meek. Jesus invites us to come to Him and reminds us of His character, “for I am gentle and lowly in heart” (Matthew 11:28-30). Jesus’ gentleness did not lead Him to not rebuke sin sharply in the lives of individuals. John 2:13-17 record how Jesus drove out those who were selling sheep and oxen in the temple, poured out the changer’s money, and overturned their tables. Jesus also would sharply rebuke the scribes and Pharisees calling them hypocrites on multiple occasions (Matthew 23). When Jesus was on trial though, we catch a glimpse of His gentleness. He did not seek to defend Himself or deliver Himself by exercising the great power He possessed. 1 Peter 2:23 reminds us of how, “when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously.” Jesus meekly and gently suffered on our behalf. Do we respond as Jesus and Moses did when we are faced with personal accusations and attacks? Do we have such meekness and gentleness?

Paul would display for us the attitude of gentleness or meekness. In 2 Corinthians 10:1 he writes, “Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness

of Christ - who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you.” Paul would rebuke sin and demand it be dealt with (1 Corinthians 5:1-4). At the same time, Paul displays gentleness and meekness in being willing to forgive the erring brother when he repents (2 Corinthians 2:6-8). Are we willing to be meek and gentle as Paul was?

Meekness is an important ingredient in our relationships in life. Husbands and wives would benefit by showing meekness toward one another in their relationship. In fact 1 Peter 3:4 would encourage wives to be adorned, “with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.” Marital conflicts could be minimized or handled more properly if spouses possessed meekness or gentleness. Gentleness is needed in our relationships with fellow brethren. Ephesians 4:1-3 teaches us, “to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Unity in the body of Christ requires us to have an attitude of gentleness in our lives. Galatians 6:1 and 2 Timothy 2:24-26 stress the need to have gentleness as we attempt to correct and restore those who have become caught up in a trespass. Correction must take place in such situations but our attitude should be to help them get out of their sins and not just to vent our personal frustrations toward them. Gentleness and meekness needs to be displayed toward all men. Titus was told to remind the brethren, “to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men” (Titus 3:2). Meekness is one way we can display the character of God to those around about us and thus be people who are bearing the fruit of the Spirit.