

Meekness and Quietness

by Dougan Clark

The sermon emphasizes the importance of meekness and quietness as a characteristic of Christian character, which is a result of inward holiness and is seen in the outward life.

Scripture: Psalm 46:1, Proverbs 16:32, Galatians 5:22, Philippians 4:6, James 1:19, 1 Peter 3:4

Topics: "Spiritual Maturity", "Christian Humility"

Description

Dougan Clark preaches on the importance of meekness and quietness as outward manifestations of inward holiness. He emphasizes that maintaining meekness and calmness in the midst of trials and afflictions is a reflection of spiritual maturity and trust in God's sovereignty. The sanctified believer is encouraged to exhibit patience and submission even in the face of political struggles, calamities, misunderstandings, and personal afflictions, knowing that God is in control. Meekness and quietness are distinguished from fanaticism, highlighting the importance of humility, trust, and willingness to follow God's guidance.

Transcript

The outer life of holiness exhibits in a remarkable degree, a deportment characterized by meekness and quietness. Inward meekness and quietness will necessarily produce outward meekness and quietness. This trait of Christian character is so manifest to all beholders, and we may add so attractive, that the Apostle Peter speaks of it as an ornament and assures us that it is in the sight of God of great price.

The meek and quiet spirit, in its outward manifestation, is opposite to impatience and worry and fretfulness. "Disorderly passions," says Matthew Henry, "are like stormy winds in the soul; they toss and harry it, and often strand or overset it. They move it as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind;" it is the prophet's comparison, and is an apt emblem of a man in a passion. Now meekness restrains these winds, says to them, peace, be still, and so preserves a calm soul and makes it conformable to Him, who has the wind in His hand, and is herein to be praised, that even the stormy winds fulfill his word."

Meekness and quietness in the outward manner resulting from inward holiness is maintained even in the midst of trials and afflictions. Such trials are appointed to our race and will be permitted to assail us so long as we are in the body. In the presence of sorrow, however, most Christians are appalled -- they exhibit restlessness, discontent, almost rebellion -- they are ready to question the rightfulness of the affliction, they look, around to see where they can fix the blame, and are in a state of mind the reverse of tranquility and calmness.

On the other hand the sanctified believer, while he feels the anguish of outward affliction not less keenly than others maintains, nevertheless, a patient and subdued exterior -- meekness and calmness of outward manner and a quiet trustfulness of demeanor, which are the result of spiritual equipoise -- the steadiness and submissiveness of a soul that is anchored in God.

The Christian who is possessed of the invaluable trait of meekness and quietness of spirit, is not disturbed by the tumults and over-turnings of political struggles, by the calamities that afflict his state or nation, nor even by misunderstandings and misrepresentations and unkind treatment on the part of other people, even if they be of those whom he regards as his friends. He knows that God is at the helm of affairs. He knows that his individual interests and the interests of the state and the nation are safe in His Almighty hands, and that they can be safe nowhere else. He is not even troubled by the schisms and heresies in the Church, nor by wars or rumors of war in the world, nor by the endless commotions which are every where manifest, and which cause our fallen humanity in very truth to be like the sea when it cannot rest, whose stormy waters in their heavings and subsidings, are still only casting up mire and dirt.

Such a man or woman does not quarrel with events, because he believes that events are providences. He does not murmur when God's hand is laid heavily upon himself or his family, or his possessions, or his Church, or his nation, because he knows that it is in the hand of a Father, with the sublime appropriating faith of the sweet Psalmist of Israel, the sanctified believer can say, "The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength in whom I will trust: my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower;" and again in the words of the 46th Psalm which Luther and Melancthon used to sing with holy fervor, when encompassed by difficulties and dangers: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

This meekness and quietness of the outward life must by no means be confounded with sluggishness or indifference, nor yet with stoicism nor philosophy. Is it not the pride of the human will -- which sometimes even in the unregenerate, keeps its possessors in an attitude of sullen quietness, in the midst of sorrow, determined not to yield to his afflictions by exhibiting any mark of weakness -- but to meet them with what he calls manliness or fortitude?

We do not undervalue true manliness nor womanliness, but O, how different is true godliness! It is well, even for those who do not have the supports and consolations of religion, to bear up under misfortune. and not give way to afflictions in such a way, or to such a degree as to interfere with the dull, cold routine of their daily duties, but, O, how inexpressibly better it is to have the bosom of Infinite Love to lean upon in the dark hour of calamity, and to look into His face with an eye of perfect submission, and to whisper lovingly, Thou doest all things well. Ah, beloved reader, is not this, in its measure, "the patience and the faith of the saints?"

The meekness and quietness of outward manner which belongs to the life of holiness, is separated by a world-wide distance from fanaticism. One of the chief things that characterize a fanatical tendency of mind, is restlessness, zeal, hurry, impatience, and a determination to have its own way. In every one who is led astray by fanaticism the self-line is still plainly manifest, and this often in connection with strong delusion from the evil one. Not meekness, but arrogant assumption; not quietness, but noise, flurry, haste and unwillingness to be advised or restrained -these and such as these, are the dispositions of the fanatical mind.

The lazy and indifferent lag behind their guide and accomplish nothing. They are out of sight when work is to be done. The fanatical and zealous rush ahead of their guide, and are busy to no purpose. Their works are done only to perish. The meek and quiet ones can wait as well as work -- they keep abreast of the guide or right in his footsteps -- they trust Him fully and His commandments, their work shall be established and their fruit shall remain. Glory to God!

This blessed ornament may be worn and exhibited by its possessor at all times and in all places. Not like human ornaments for ostentation, but as a matter of necessity. It is a part of the outward life of holiness, because it is a part of the inner life. As it always exists within the sanctified heart, so its sweet and precious adornment is always seen in the outer life. The man or woman who has it may be unconscious of it, but it will be clearly seen by others in the look, in the manner, in the words, in the acts, and in the whole outward walk. The possessor of this priceless gem, cannot but let his light shine.

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