

Discipleship Questions

What does it mean to be meek?

What did it mean for Jesus to be meek in heart?

How did Jesus's meekness impact the burden He placed on those who follow Him?

How was Jesus's meekness contrasted with the prevailing ideas of the Messiah as a military conqueror?

How was Jesus's meekness prophesied?

How was Jesus's meekness seen leading up to His death?

How was Jesus's meekness seen in His death?

What does Jesus's example teach you about being meek?



Those who desire to be Jesus's disciples must endeavor to learn Jesus's teachings and ways and imitate Him by walking as He walked (1 John 2:3-6; 1 Corinthians 11:1). One aspect of Jesus's life that must be imitated is the way Jesus was meek. Therefore, we must consider the Scriptures that give us insight into the way Jesus demonstrated meekness so we can learn how to walk in His footsteps in the way that we are meek.

Matthew 11:28-30

Part of what should attract people to Jesus is His humility and meekness. The Greek word "praus" is often translated "humble," "gentle," or "meek." No one English word fully captures the ideas of this word, as it blends both gentleness and strength. Therefore, meekness is not weakness, timidity, or a lack of conviction; but, rather, is humble strength held under God's control to ensure that God's will is accomplished above one's own will (like a bridled horse). Concerning Jesus, notice that he was meek in heart. Therefore, it was not an empty act or demonstration. Instead, it was at the core of who He was! Because of that, Jesus's meekness permeated everything Jesus did, not just showing up at random times (even in John 2:13-25, Matthew 23:1-36, etc.). In this text, Jesus's meekness worked to provide a lighter burden placed on those who come to Him than He could have placed on those He would give His life for!

Matthew 12:15-21

The Jewish people often expected the Messiah to come as an earthly warrior who would conquer all His enemies with great force. Yet, Matthew's quotation from Isaiah 42:1-4 demonstrates that their expectation for the Messiah had been wrong. The picture in the prophecy is one of meekness

(humble strength held under God's control to accomplish His will). Certainly, Jesus could have come and conquered all the nations of earth through His power and strength – and He was even offered the allegiance of all the kingdoms of the world (Matthew 4:8-10). However, Jesus was focused on a kingdom that was not of this world (John 18:33-37). Because of what He needed to accomplish, Jesus did not live with reckless abandon in pursuit of physical power (v. 19). Instead, Jesus cared for even the weakest so they would not be broken, but could experience the spiritual victory He came to provide (vv. 20-21)!

Isaiah 53:4-9

The Messiah was prophesied (especially in Isaiah) to be the Suffering Servant. That is precisely who Jesus was. This passage demonstrates that Jesus would face numerous sources of affliction and suffering on His way to death. In this, His meekness can be seen even in that He willingly left Heaven and came to earth, knowing this suffering awaited Him (Philippians 2:5-11). Furthermore, this passage pictures Jesus as not opening His mouth to speak against those who were falsely accusing Him or sentencing Him to death, to stop His suffering (Matthew 26:59-68; 27:11-14, 27-31; 1 Peter 2:21-23). At any point, Jesus could have stopped the wickedness being done to Him, exposed the foolishness of those who were insulting and accusing Him, and halted the judgment that sentenced Him to crucifixion – and Jesus knew it! Yet, Jesus knew it was God's plan for Him (the Messiah) to suffer and die to provide the sacrifice necessary for sin (Matthew 16:21-23), and chose to hold His tongue. His meekness was, therefore, one of the core attributes that resulted in Jesus allowing Himself to be led like a lamb to the slaughter (John 1:29)!

Matthew 21:1-11

Here is a crucial point in Jesus's mission: His entrance into Jerusalem preceding His crucifixion. This was the fulfillment of prophecy concerning how the Messiah would enter Jerusalem (Zion, Zechariah 9:9). Although it was not without precedent for a king to ride on such an animal (2 Samuel 16:1-2; 1 Kings 1:33), it was certainly not the same image as a king/emperor on a warhorse! In this, Jesus demonstrated He was not a Messiah who conquered with physical force, but One who conquers through devotion to the Father's will, even when that involved suffering (Acts 2:23)!

Matthew 26:47-56

This was now the moment that directly began the physical sufferings Jesus would endure in His death. Judas (one of Jesus's apostles) led a mob to

arrest Jesus in exchange for 30 silver pieces (Matthew 26:1-5; 27:3-10). For Peter (John 18:10), this marked a moment to fight (presumably so the Messiah would conquer physically). Instead, this was a moment for Jesus's meekness to shine! Jesus rebuked Peter's aggressive use of force to defend Him physically, instructing Peter to put his sword back in its place, since Jesus's kingdom would not involve the use of a physical sword (only the sword of God's word, Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 6:17; Revelation 1:16). Furthermore, Jesus went on to heal the injured enemy who had come to arrest Him. Jesus knew that He could physically conquer all these enemies by asking for more than twelve legions of angels (perhaps 72,000+ angels). However, Jesus was focused on fulfilling God's plan for Him to lay down His life as the sacrifice for the sins of the world (John 1:29)!

Matthew 27:32-44

As Jesus hung suspended on the cross (offering Himself for the sacrifice for the sins of the world), He continued to be mocked. He was mocked by those watching Him be crucified, as well as the criminals being crucified next to Him. Specifically, they mocked that if He really was the Son of God who pleases His Heavenly Father, He would remove Himself or call on His Father to remove Him from the cross. They mocked that He saved others but could not now save Himself. Jesus endured this mocking without reply, knowing completely that He could be spared from death on the cross. Yet, Jesus knew what they did not realize – that if He was saved from death, they (and we) would not have the opportunity to be saved eternally! So, Jesus meekly endured the ridicule, shame, and suffering of the cross by holding His own strength under the control of doing the Father's will and His love for mankind!

Conclusion

Imitating Jesus requires that you demonstrate meekness like Jesus demonstrated meekness. Although there is much more that could be discussed, we have seen Jesus's meekness as coming from His heart and permeating the entirety of His life. Ultimately, Jesus refused to exercise His own strength in any way that was contrary to the will of the Father. Therefore, disciples of Jesus must put the will of God above the pursuit of their own desires!

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