

2018  
BIBLE STUDY RETREAT

*Living the  
Fruit of  
the Spirit*



REVEALING THE EVIDENCE  
OF GOD'S WORK

January 11-13, 2018  
Beach Cove Resort  
North Myrtle Beach

**Online Retreat Resources**

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**2019 Retreat Dates  
January 17-19, 2019**

# 2018 Bible Study Retreat

## *Living the Fruit of the Spirit*

Revealing the Evidence of God's Work

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As we do each year, we will have breaks at various points during each session. You will be given time during the Saturday morning session to clear your room and check out. The hotel usually does not permit late checkout. Luggage may be brought to the Conference Room. We will need help breaking down and loading up at the end of the final session.



# INTRODUCTION

## TO THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Pastor Grady Parker

### GALATIANS 5:22-23

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

It is one thing to overcome the flesh and *NOT DO* evil things, but quite something else *TO DO* good things. Negative goodness is not enough in life, as there must be positive qualities as well.

- There is a great difference between “*Producing*” and “*Bearing*.”
- There is a very important contrast between works and fruit. In our study this week we will consider that contrast.
- The New Testament speaks of several different kinds of fruit. The Fruit of the Spirit has to do with *building Christian Character* and how we can have this fruit in our lives.
- Cultivation of fruit is very important, and we will consider what is involved in this process.
- This fruit is to be eaten, not put on display.
- People are starving for LOVE, JOY, PEACE, GENTLENESS, and so much more that we can offer.
- We do not bear fruit for our own consumption; we bear spiritual fruit that others might be fed and helped—and that Christ might be glorified.

# THE PRIMACY OF LOVE

Dr. Ernie Hack

This phrase, “*The essence of life is to love and be loved*” was stressed by J. Robertson McQuilkin when he was still with us. It’s a great summary of what we all need to experience.

Think of those who do outrageous things. Many come from, or live in settings that are very unloving. Squabbling and fighting characterize where they are in life. Hurts and hatred prevail. Their hurts incline them toward hurting others. See the book, *Hurt People, Hurt People*.

Instead, we should “Live a life of love as Christ loved us” (Eph. 5:2).

## 1. God Calls Us to Love

- a. Key passages to note: Matt. 5:43-44; 22:36-40; Jn. 13:34-35; Rom. 13:8; Gal. 5:13.
- b. A key interaction to note: The special encounter Jesus had with Peter recorded in John 21:15-17.
  - 1) This was a time of restoration for Peter.
  - 2) Two kinds of love are seen here – “*agape*” and “*phileo*.” We find “*eros*” love attractive, but tend to neglect the other two kinds.
  - 3) Loving God first and foremost leads to loving others effectively.  
We express our love for God by the ways in which we feed His lambs and sheep.

## 2. God-like Characteristics of Love

- a. The Lord Jesus Christ displayed God’s love perfectly.
- b. Jesus demonstrated God’s kind of love (*agape*) at the deepest of levels.
  - 1) Level 1: Displaying sincere feelings of care and concern for those we appreciate.
  - 2) Level 2: Displaying kind, purposeful actions leading to the highest good of others.
  - 3) Level 3: Displaying love unconditionally even when it’s not reciprocated.
  - 4) Level 4: Displaying love for the Lord which leads to the full surrender of everything to Him.
  - 5) Level 5: Displaying attitudes and actions of love that result in great sacrifices.
  - 6) Level 6: Displaying love to our enemies which works for their greatest good.
  - 7) Level 7: Displaying the kind of love to one’s enemies which forgives all wrongs, pays all debts (including those owed to the one doing the loving), and incorporates these enemies into one’s own family.

- c. J. Robertson McQuilkin summarized God kind of love this way:

*The essence of life is to love and be loved. ... It is the basic drive, the mainspring, the motive of all human action. ... It flows joyfully from affection to action, even painfully across the bridge of the cross.*

### 3. Our Lack of Love

- a. It's pathetic, isn't it? Our lack of love for the Lord and for what He loves is pathetic. We know this is true because when we follow the trail of our activities we soon arrive at the throne room of what or who is controlling us. The Lord our God needs to be on the throne in our lives, and pursuing His will should be our constant delight. If our attitude and activities do not reflect this we have a telltale sign that our love for Him and His will is weak – probably very weak.
- b. We may not join the fool of Luke 12:13-21 in saying, "You have plenty of good things laid up ... eat, drink and be merry," but many of us live like we believe this.
- c. Remember, Christ demonstrated His love for us in ultimate terms. He came to be one of us, died to redeem us, and lives to companion with us. He did this because of His impassioned love for us. These words remind us of this:

Refrain:	<i>Could we with ink the ocean fill,</i>
<i>O love of God, how rich and pure!</i>	<i>And were the skies of parchment made.</i>
<i>How measureless and strong!</i>	<i>Were every stalk on earth a quill,</i>
<i>It shall forevermore endure;</i>	<i>And every man a scribe by trade.</i>
<i>The saints' and angels' song.</i>	<i>To write the love of God above</i>
	<i>Would drain the ocean dry.</i>
	<i>Nor could the scroll contain the whole</i>
	<i>Though stretched from sky to sky.</i>

### 4. God's Supply of Love

Galatians 5:22 puts it in a nutshell: "*The fruit of the Spirit is love ...*" Thank you, dear Spirit of God, for your love. Please, please, make it real in us.

**Conclusion:** I'd like to be remembered by these realities:

*He lived for the greatest of things  
– showing us love and sharing God's truth –  
because he lived for the Christ, the King of Kings.*

# Joy'D

Rev. Michael Sims

**Definition of Joy** – Greek word 'Chara' – meaning cheerfulness,  
\_\_\_\_\_, gladness.

Note: There is no Biblical distinction between happiness and joy. Both involve emotions and are pleasurable.

**Deflections of Joy** - Death, Disease, Disagreements, Dissatisfaction, Drama

Note: It's not always the enemy that steals our joy (John 10:10). Sometimes it's just life's distractions.

**Derivation of Joy** – Author and creator of all things.

\_\_\_\_\_ of God (Psalm 16:11),

Conviction and Power of God's Word (Nehemiah 8),

Abiding \_\_\_\_\_ (John 15)

**Durability of Joy** – Delight in disasters?

Possible in every \_\_\_\_\_ (James 1:2)

\_\_\_\_\_ genuine faith (1 Peter 1:6-9)



**Duty of Joy – God or man?**

Command to man - “Blessed are you when men hate you ... Be glad in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven” (Luke 6:22-23)

Gift of God – “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing” (Romans 15:13)

Natural Fruit, or evidence, of a relationship with God (Galatians 5:22)

Note: Much like salvation, there is a paradoxical balance between the sovereignty of God and the will of man that work together without contradicting one another.

**Drive of Joy – Why choose joy?**

It's \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Creates a healthier person, both \_\_\_\_\_  
(Proverbs 17:22)

Brings hope to the lost (Romans 15:8-13, 2 Corinthians 4:7-10, 6:1-13)

**Directions for Joy:**

Communicate with God regularly

Dig into God's Word daily (not just a brief read)

Surround yourself with likeminded believers (joy is contagious)

Believe God's plans are for your good

# The Need for Peace

Dr. Ernie Hack

When immigrants apply for the privilege of becoming American citizens they must demonstrate that they can speak English. In my case I was asked to write out this phrase: "What the world needs is peace." Having done so I then told my interviewer that I would change this. She asked me if I disagreed with the statement. I replied that while I agreed with it, I would add to it by saying, "What the world needs is peace with God."

It's typical of the people of the world to leave out the essential elements of life which can make it the best of experiences. This has become vivid at Christmas time. Santa is now portrayed as the great hero, while Christ is sidelined. Just look at the Christmas lights which are displayed, and listen to the songs which are sung. Yet, Christ is the only one who can bring true peace into the world, which He does by bringing personal peace to more and more individuals.

## 1. First and Foremost, We Need Peace with God

- a. This phrase sums up what is involved: *No Jesus, no peace; know Jesus, know peace.*
- b. Romans 5:1 reminds us that when ***"we have been justified through faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*** The angels saw the coming of this when they announced, ***"Peace to men on whom (God's) favor rests" (Lk. 2:14).***
- c. The tract, "Steps to Peace with God" helps us explain how God's peace is made real.

Illustration: My pastor fumbled when he was asked about this. I was shocked.

### 1) There are Four Essential Truths to Embrace

- a) God loves you and has a purpose for you.

John 3:16 (NKJV) says, ***"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."***

John 10:10 (NKJV) says, ***"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."***

- b) Sin separates us from God.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) says, ***"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."***

People often try to bridge this gap by doing a lot of good things, but no bridge reaches God except one.

- c) God's bridge is the cross

John 14:6 (NKJV) says, ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."***

Jesus is the only way to God and to His heaven

- d) God redeems those who trust the Lord Jesus Christ on His terms

John 1:12 (ESV) says, ***"But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God."***

Romans 10:9 (ESV) says, ***"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."***

## 2) Specific Steps to Take

- a) Admit your need (agree that you are a sinner).
- b) Be willing to turn from your sins (repent).
- c) Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross and rose from the grave.
- d) Pray a prayer like this: *"Dear God I know that I am a sinner. I want to turn from my sins, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe that Jesus Christ is your Son. I believe He died for my sins and that you raised Him to life. I want Him to come into my heart and take control of my life. I want to trust Jesus as my Savior and follow Him as my Lord from this day forward. In Jesus' name. Amen."*

## 2. We Now Need Christ's Peace to Pervade Our Hearts

- a. Christ gives His disciples peace, but not as the world gives it (John 14:27).
- b. Christ's peace pervades when we follow the stipulations He has given us.

Remember, God keeps us in perfect peace when our minds are "stayed on" Him (Is. 26:3, KJV). Philippians 4:7 teaches us that God's peace will guard our hearts and minds when we are in Christ Jesus. Living in Christ involves rejoicing in the Lord always, not becoming anxious about anything, praying with thanksgiving and bringing our requests to God. (Phil. 4:4-6). As we live by the Bible's instructions we are enabled to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts (Col. 3:15).

**Conclusion:** Paint a picture of a bird at rest near the waves at the seashore.

# SELF-CONTROL

## And Other Seemingly Impossible Tasks

Rev. Michael Sims

\_\_\_\_\_ are powerful motivators, both positively and negatively.

The term self-control implies that there are desires within us that must not be

\_\_\_\_\_.

Matthew 16:24-26

Temperance/Self-Control = derivative of a word meaning 'strong in a thing', 'masterful'.

We're tasked with the control, not \_\_\_\_\_. Self-Control. Not God-Control.

To be masters of our lives is more than a simple refraining of certain things. It's complete control of all things.

Diet. Entertainment. Language. Emotions. Finances. Schedules. Health.

Self-control is evidence of a Spirit-led life, but it can be learned and improved.

Illustration: Professor Walter Mischel's "Marshmallow Study"

**Self-Control Straight From God's Word:**

2 Peter 1:3-11 – To obtain godliness, practice self-control

1 Peter 4:7 – To be heard and answered by God, practice self-control

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 – Like a disciplined athlete, practice self-control

Matthew 5:29 – Offensively and aggressively, practice self-control

2 Timothy 1:5-8 – For a sincere and bold faith, practice self-control

Titus 2:11-14 – As you await the Lord's return, practice self-control

Self-control is not just refraining from evil, but actively pursuing \_\_\_\_\_

The difference in worldly and Christian self-control lies in answering the following question; Who will get the \_\_\_\_\_ for victory?

The partner and friend of self-control is the first 8 fruits.

If we love... If we have joy... If we have patience... self-control manifests itself naturally.

# GOODNESS

Pastor Grady Parker

The word “good” carries with it the idea of having quality moral and spiritual excellence. It refers to one’s attitude toward others. Goodness is practical Christianity – love in action. Paul helped define this fruit when he observed **“One will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would even dare to die” (ROMANS 5:7)**. A Christian can be morally upright but still not manifest the grace of Goodness. He may be admired and respected for his high moral standards and might even have a friend who would risk his life for him. But the upright person who also has goodness is much more likely to have self-sacrificing friends. Goodness is different from justice. Justice is the quality which gives a man what is due him. Goodness is the quality which is out to do far more than that, for goodness desires to give a man all that is to be his benefit and help.

One cannot study and understand the gift of “Goodness” unless he first considers the goodness of God. We read in **PSALM 33:5: “He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.”** Again, we read of the goodness of God in **Psalm 34:8: “O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusts in Him.”**

Think of the many ways God expresses His goodness to us. He loved us while we were yet in our sin and expressed that love by forgiving our sin and saving our soul. In addition, He meets our daily needs for which we often fail to thank Him. David had a deep understanding of God’s goodness, as he repeatedly reveals in his psalms. **“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (PSALM 23:6)**. He confessed: **“I had fainted unless I had believed see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (PSALM 27:13)**. Before he finished the letter to the Galatians, **Paul said, “As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” GALATIANS 6:10)**.

Believers are to be full of all goodness, for one of the fruits of the Spirit is GOODNESS. That means to be full of virtue and excellence, kindness and helpfulness along with peace and

consideration. It means a person is full of all good and he does all the good he can. He has a good heart and good behavior. In other words, he is a quality person.

We must remember that we live in a fallen world where good behavior is not always rewarded, and bad behavior is not always punished.

***Dennis the Menace in the comic strip / good words***

When we see a notorious criminal prospering or an innocent child in pain, we say, "That's wrong." It is because sin has twisted justice and made our world more unprotected and difficult to live in.

The Book of Job shows a good man suffering for no apparent fault of his own. Sadly, our nation is much like that. But Job's story does not end in despair. Through Job's life we can see that faith in God is justified even when our own situation looks hopeless. Faith based on rewards or prosperity is empty. Faith must be based on the confidence that God's ultimate purpose will come to pass. Whether we see it or not, God is working out His good purpose.

Goodness is \_\_\_\_\_ . The person with this gift will be kind and gentle even with those who are most offensive and will show goodness where others show evil. We never know what good will come out of a seemingly hopeless situation. Any trial a believer faces can ultimately bring glory to God, because God can bring good out of any bad situation.

***ROMANS 8:28 – "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."***

God works in all things for our good. Evil is prevalent in our sinful world, but God is able to turn every circumstance into something good. God is working in our lives to fulfill His purpose. Notice that ROMANS 8:28 is *not for everyone*. It can be claimed only by those who love God and are fitting into His plans. Circumstances are never so bad that they are beyond God's help. Jacob finally got his son (Joseph) back; Job got a new family; Mary regained her brother, Lazarus. We must never despair for we belong to God.

## **GOD IS FULL OF GOODNESS**

God's ability to do good is not limited by our \_\_\_\_\_. As their brother grew very sick, Mary and Martha turned to Jesus for help. They believed in His ability to help because they had seen His miracles. We too, know of the miracles of Jesus, both from Scripture and the changed lives we have seen. When we need extra help, Jesus offers extraordinary resources.

Any trial a believer faces can ultimately bring glory to God, because God can bring good out of any bad situation. So, when trouble comes your way how do you handle it? Do you grumble, complain, or blame God--or do you see your problems as opportunities to honor Him?

God works in "all things" not just isolated incidents for our good. This does not mean that all that happens to us is good.

***"For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth (EPHESIANS 5:9).***

***"He loves righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord" (PSALM 33:5).***

***"God's goodness leads to \_\_\_\_\_. (Read ROMANS 2:1-4).***

## **BELIEVERS ARE TO BE FULL OF ALL GOODNESS**

A good person lives and treats everyone just as they should be treated. He does not take advantage of any person nor does he stand by and let others take advantage. He is kind and gentle even with the most offensive and will sow goodness where others sow evil. Human nature can never do this on its own; only the Holy Spirit can. He lives and stands up for what is right, good and just. This means that goodness involves discipline and rebuke, correction and instruction, as well as love and care and peace. A good person will not let evil run rampant. He will not allow evil to indulge itself and treat others unjustly. Goodness steps forward and does what it can to stop and control evil.

***"And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another" (ROMANS 15:14).***



# LONGSUFFERING

Rev. Brion Holland



# GENTLENESS

Pastor Grady Parker

**Gentleness allows others to grow.**

King James Version has this word as "MEEKNESS." The idea again is closely akin to love and kindness. Gentleness is a powerful character quality as we can see in Scripture. It is often overlooked in our society--power gains much more respect even though no one likes to be bullied. Gentleness is love in action---being considerate, meeting the needs of others, allowing time for the other person to talk, and being willing to learn. It is an essential trait for both men and women. The call is to maintain a gentle attitude in our relationship with others. In no sense does it imply \_\_\_\_\_ rather, it means \_\_\_\_\_ under control.

The person who is gentle does not act hard, indifferent, harsh, unconcerned, too busy or bitter. Gentleness cares for the feelings of others and feels with them. It experiences the full depth of sympathy and empathy. Gentleness shows care and gets right into the situation with person. Gentleness suffers with those who suffer and struggles with those who struggle, and works with those who work.

The word was sometimes used of a wild animal that had been tamed. The true Christian gentleman is no weakling. He is the one who has the right combination of strength and tenderness. The strong Son of God Himself is "gentle and lowly in heart" (MATTHEW 11:29).

***"Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. But we proved to be gentle among you as nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children"***

***(I THESSALONIANS 2:6-7).***

## **Gentleness makes learning possible.**

As a teacher, young Timothy helped those who were confused about the truth, Paul's advice to Timothy and to all who teach God's truth today: Be humble, patient, courteous explaining the truth. Good teaching never promotes quarrels or foolish arguments. Whether you are teaching Sunday School, leading a Bible Study or preaching in church, remember to listen to the questions people ask and treat them gently and with respect. Always avoid foolish debates.

Let us read Paul's advice to young Timothy in **2 TIMOTHY 2:23-25**.

## **Gentleness is a mark of wisdom.**

Some people claim to be wise but, they act foolishly. True wisdom can be measured by the depth a person's character. Just as you can identify a tree by the type of fruit it produces, you can evaluate your wisdom by the way you act. Foolishness leads to disorder, but wisdom leads to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Are you tempted to amplify a conflict, or pass on the gossip, or fan the fire of discord? Careful, winsome speech and wise, loving words are the seeds of peace and the sure marks of a Peacemaker (MATTHEW 5:9).

It is easy for us to be drawn into wrong desires by the pressures of society and sometimes by even well-meaning Christians. Seeking God's wisdom delivers us from the need to compare ourselves with others and want what they have.

To be gentle means to have a sweetness of temper that puts others at ease. This is a characteristic of our Lord ***"Or do you think lightly of the riches of His goodness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" (ROMANS 2:4)***. Our Lord never treats us the way we deserve to be treated. This character quality will be increasingly evident in our lives as we allow the Holy Spirit to develop it in us.

God expects us to be gentle and kind. ***“But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men.” LUKE 6:35***). Showing undeserved kindness imitates God’s character. One way to put love to work is to take the initiative in meeting specific needs. This is easy to do with people who love us; people whom we trust; God’s love means doing this even to those who dislike us. Most of us have learned how to pretend to love others--how to speak kindly, to avoid hurting their feelings. But God is calling us to express real and sincere love that goes far beyond \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ . Sincere love requires concentration and effort. It means helping others to become better people. It demands our time and personal involvement. No individual has the capacity to express love to a whole community, but the body of Christ called OAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH has that capacity, if we will only take advantage of it. We need to look for people who need our love, and look for ways to express the love of Christ to our community. Some who do not know Christ may be offended that we confront people with the Gospel, but notice that the Bible speaks to that in a forceful way.

***“If someone mistreats you because you are a Christian, don’t curse him; pray that God will bless him. When others are happy, be happy with them. If they are sad, share their sorrow” (ROMANS 12:14ff, TLB).***

Gentleness is one of the characteristics of God’s people. The Bible offers a strategy to help us live in a way that pleases God each day:

1. Imitate Christ’s compassionate forgiving attitude (Colossians 3:12-13).
2. Let love guide your life (Colossians 3:14).
3. Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart (Colossians 3:15).
4. Always be thankful (Colossians 3:15).
5. Keep God’s Word in your heart and mind each day (Colossians 3:16).
6. Live your life to please Christ each day (Colossians 3:17).

# MEEKNESS

Pastor Grady Parker

Meekness means to be gentle, tender, humble, mild and considerate, but strongly so. Meekness has the strength to control and discipline and does so at the right time. It means the right use of power and authority, power under control. Meekness is not \_\_\_\_\_ . *Jesus said, "I am meek and lowly in heart" (MATTHEW 11:29)*. Moses was "very meek" (*Read NUMBERS 12:3*), yet no one could accuse either of them of being weak. In the New Testament this word is used to describe three attitudes:

Submissiveness to the will of God (**COLOSSIANS 3:12**)

Ability to be taught (**JAMES 1:21**)

Consideration of others (**EPHESIANS 4:2**)

The meek Christian does not throw his weight around or assert himself. Just as wisdom is the right use of knowledge, so meekness is the right use of power and authority. Meekness has a strong state of mind. It looks at the situation and wants justice and right to be done. It is not a weak mind that ignores and neglects evil and wrong-doing, abuse and suffering.

A person with this gift of the Spirit simply loves people and loves peace; therefore, he walks humbly among men regardless of their stature and or circumstances in life. He can associate with the poor and lowly without difficulty. He desires to be a friend to all and to provide help to all as much as possible. If someone is suffering, meekness steps in and does what it can to help. When evil is being done, meekness goes to work to stop and correct it. If evil is running rampant and indulging itself, meekness actually strikes out in anger. However, the anger is always at the right time and against the right thing.

The meek person has strong\_\_\_\_\_. He controls his spirit and his mind. He is in control of the lust of his flesh, and does not give way to ill temper, retaliation, passion, or indulgence. In fact, the meek person dies to himself and to what his flesh would like to do, and he does the right thing--which is exactly what God wants him to do.

One of the best Biblical examples of meekness is found in **NUMBERS 12:3-9**. Who is it? \_\_\_\_\_ . So, let us consider his gift of Meekness and how that gift was used in his life as the leader of God's people. Moses had married a Cushite woman and Miriam and Aaron had severely criticized him. Take a look at what else this passage teaches us: Miriam and Aaron were not criticizing the right of Moses to be leader. They were grumbling because they wanted their position and call to be more recognized and honored among the people. They just wanted equal recognition, and honor for their call and position. And the Lord heard their complaining (**Verse 2**).

This is a good reminder for all of us: God hears everything--our complaining, grumbling, murmuring, criticism, every attack. Notice that God stood ready to defend and execute justice on behalf of His servant, Moses. We see the response of Moses in **Verse 3**: He said nothing in answer to his attackers. He remained silent and here's why: he was meek and humble, more than anyone else on the face of the earth (**Verse 3**). Remember, Moses was not eloquent: he was slow of speech and tongue. He certainly was not fluent or skillful with words. This probably means that Moses recoiled and withdrew as much as possible from criticism. While we do not know exactly what all his reactions were, we can be sure these unjustified words of criticism did not help him. He felt incapable of handling such situations because of his speech impediment. He knew Miriam and Aaron were wrong, but he did not know exactly what to say to them. Despite their obvious pride and focus upon themselves, Moses did not want to hurt them nor degrade them before other leaders.

There are some very important lessons to be learned from this Scripture:

1. Criticism, grumbling, and murmuring against God's servant is forbidden by God.

**PSALM 105:15 -- "Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm.**

**HEBREWS 13:17 -- "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you."**

**I CORINTHIANS 4:1 -- "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."**

2. The servant of God is not to react against \_\_\_\_\_ and not to be combative. In the face of criticism, the minister is to be meek and humble and totally dependent upon God.

**ROMANS 12:3 -- "For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted a measure of faith."**

Notice that Miriam and Aaron came under the chastisement of God for their complaining. See that God immediately took over the situation and called the three of them to meet Him in the Tabernacle. God strongly rebuked them and chastised Miriam by striking her with \_\_\_\_\_. Aaron was stricken with fear when he saw Miriam. God defended His unique call to His servant, Moses.



A person with this fruit of the Spirit walks in a humble, tender, but strong state of mind; he denies himself, giving consideration to others. He shows control and a righteous anger against injustice and evil. The meek man forgets and lives for others because of what Christ has done for him. Once again, Meekness allows no place for pride, arrogance or selfishness and it is evidenced by self-control.

Christ is the perfect example of meekness.

***(PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8). "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus. Who although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death on a cross."***

How do we treat others when they oppose us? What is our attitude when we encounter believers who are in error? Only the Spirit of God can produce meekness under such circumstances or under any other circumstance.

# FAITH

Rev. Brion Holland



**2018 Bible Study Retreat  
January 11—13, 2018**

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