

Christian Retirement

Part 67

By [Thomas Reade](#)

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ON MEEKNESS

The apostle Peter exhorts us to put on "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." May I ever prize what Infinite Excellence esteems so precious! And yet, alas! how soon do we disfigure this holy ornament, when any little thing crosses our temper. This is highly sinful. We should not so readily cast away a diamond, because of some trifling opposition to our will. Oh! may I learn wisdom in the school of Christ, and seek for more grace from that Savior, who has so kindly said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find."

The greatest part of our unhappiness in life arises, not so much from cross providences, as from cross tempers. The former only happen occasionally, to try our faith; while in some families the latter occur daily, to try our patience. Now, in proportion as we become truly Christians, in that proportion we shall resist and overcome these wasps which nestle in our bosom. He who torments others, torments himself; while he who labors to promote the happiness of his fellow-creatures, very greatly augments his own.

We see, then, how beautiful is the religion of Jesus, which is all love, and peace, and goodness. Wherever its influence is felt, there a little heaven is enjoyed. Where it is unknown, there darkness and discord reign. The world, proud and turbulent, despises this heavenly ornament, this workmanship of the Holy Spirit. May I have grace to esteem it above all those splendid ornaments, which dazzle and attract the admiration of mankind. "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart," was the condescending exhortation; "and you shall find rest unto your souls," was the gracious promise of the heavenly Savior. Rich blessings are, indeed, promised to the meek. "The meek shall inherit the earth." "The meek shall have abundance of peace." "The meek will he guide in judgment; the meek will he teach his way." "The Lord will beautify the meek with salvation."

To possess this sweet ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, I must be clothed with humility; for humility and meekness are inseparable. No mere nominal professor of Christianity ever possessed this celestial ornament. The world endeavors to counterfeit this lovely spirit by what is termed politeness; a kind of

spurious meekness and humility. When slights or insults arise, this worldly gem soon discovers its worthless composition; while the Gospel jewel brightens by attrition.

Meekness, humility, love, and purity, form the Christian character. These graces, growing out of a true faith in Jesus, evidence a vital union to him, from whom every blessing is derived.

As deformed people give no just idea of the beautiful symmetry of the human frame; so there are some professors of the Gospel, who have their minds so twisted by prejudice, and their wills made so crooked by obstinacy, that they exhibit a mere distortion of Christianity. Such people sometimes hold high doctrines, and talk much about election and final perseverance. They regard the humble, circumspect believer, as living below his privileges; and condemn his holy walk as legal, and beneath the liberty of the Gospel. Sin, they say, cannot hurt them; for they are not under the law, but under grace. They scruple not to charge their neighbors with hypocrisy; while they never, for one moment; suspect themselves.

What an awful perversion is this, of the beautiful religion of Jesus! How deformed, how unlike the new creature in Christ Jesus! In these unhappy people, we behold no ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, no garment of humility. They love to live in the storm, either of controversy or contradiction. Every word is misconstrued; every action is ascribed to some improper motive. Pride and uncharitableness mark their character. Others cannot please them; because their bosoms being the seat of conflicting passions, they cannot please themselves. Devoid of the mind which was in Christ, they resemble the ground which the Lord has cursed; yielding thorns and briars.

But how lovely does the image of the Savior appear, when reflected by the spirit and conduct of the true believer. It resembles the sun shining with unbroken luster on the peaceful lake; while the wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

These angry, contentious, loud-sounding, presumptuous professors are spots and wens in the visible church; stumbling-blocks to weaker brethren, and scandals to the world.

Lord, preserve me from this awful state. Let me ever hold the truth in righteousness. Oh that I may ever dread that presumptuous spirit, which would seize on the sacred fruits of the tree of life, without one Gospel warrant so to do; which would dare, with sacrilegious hand, to divide the precept from the promise; and, under the impious idea of exalting free grace, sin, that grace may abound. Lord, give me a holy fear of falling into sin; a jealousy over my own deceitful heart; a cleaving unto you; a delight in keeping your commandments. Enable me to walk circumspectly and warily along the slippery path of life; to watch and pray

always; to guard against the first approaches to temptation, and every incitement from my spiritual adversary to transgress your law. Put on me the lovely ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Let all anger, bitterness, and evil-speaking, be put away from me, with all malice. Let love reign in my heart, and purity adorn my soul. Oh blessed Jesus, cover me with your spotless robe of righteousness, and make me all glorious within, through the renewing influence of your grace. Let me never forget whose I am, and whom I serve. Cause me to bear your cross with holy rejoicing; until, in your kingdom of glory, the cross shall be exchanged for the crown, and sorrow be swallowed up in everlasting joy.

Father of mercies, God of love,
To you my wishes all aspire;
Descend, blest Spirit, from above,
And guard and feed the sacred fire.

Preserve me from those thousand snares,
Which Satan weaves around my path
On you I cast my hourly cares;
On you I look in humble faith.

Behold me at the bleeding cross;
Wash out, dear Lord, each guilty stain;
Oh may I count the world but loss—
Your love, my great, my richest gain.

In mercy help a feeble worm,
Whose strength is all derived from You;
You can appease the wildest storm;
And you can set the captive free.

In cheerful hope my soul relies,
Blest Savior, on your dying love,
Until I reach the blissful skies,
And strike the golden harp above.

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