

## **One**

### **The Second Beatitude is Blessed are the Meek.**

Jesus said, “Learn from me for I am meek and humble in heart.” The Poor in Spirit corresponds to humility, then comes meekness.

Could you imagine going to a professional interview and they ask, “Tell us what your greatest strength is.” And you respond, “I am meek.”

You might think that is ridiculous because what is the first thing you think of when I say “meekness”? That’s right, you think of weakness. But meekness is not weakness. It’s just the opposite.

Meekness is the calm strength that harnesses the power of anger and directs it to the good.

During the Exodus, Moses is described as the meekest man who ever lived. But he was no wimp or pushover. He was the only one who could confront Pharaoh face to face and lead one million rebellious Israelites through the desert for 40 years. And I don’t think the people in the Temple thought Jesus was weak when he drove them out with a whip. Yet he was meek.

So, maybe we need to rethink our understanding of meekness.

## **Two**

### **Anger**

Meekness is the virtue that harnesses and controls anger.

Anger is a good God-given emotion that prompts us in order to achieve something difficult or arduous, correct some evil, or endure something we can't change without giving up or without becoming evil ourselves.

Anger is meant to be constructive.

Anger becomes sinful or destructive when it exceeds the bounds of what is reasonable or justifiable, like blowing up over minor things, when we get too angry or it lasts too long.

Anger is sinful when it seeks vengeance. The purpose of anger is to rectify a wrong insofar as it leads to the restoration of what is good. Anger is sinful when it arises out of personal retribution, when our anger seeks to hurt others, and get revenge.

Anger is sinful when it arises from an unjust cause. When we use it to get our way, protect our ego, or show our importance and power.

The point of anger is to help you do what you can control, what is within the scope of your authority. Do you get angry about people and things you can't control? Do you get angry about the decisions of political authorities or Church authorities? What good is that kind of anger going to do anyone? Why get angry about people or things you can't control?

### **Three**

Meekness is the virtue, the calm strength that harnesses the power of anger and uses it for good.

Meekness is the transformation of the raw power of anger into disciplined strength.

The training of war horses illustrates meekness. Wild stallions were brought down from the mountains and broken for riding. Some were

used to pull wagons, some were raced, but the best were trained for warfare. They retained their fierce spirit, courage, and power, but were disciplined to respond to the slightest nudge or pressure of the rider's leg. They could gallop into battle at 35 miles per hour and come to a sliding stop at a word. They were not frightened by arrows, spears, or torches.

The war horse had 'power under authority,' and 'strength under control.' A warhorse never ceased to be determined, strong, and passionate. However, it learned to bring its nature under the discipline of its rider. It gave up being out of control and rebellious.

To understand the meek picture a great stallion at full gallop on a field of battle, who —at his master's voice— seizes up to an instant halt, awaiting the next order.

We don't want to get rid of the power of anger, just harness it for good. Meekness is the calm strength that harnesses the power of anger.

## **Four**

We harness the power of anger and become meek by two steps: check and command.

When the emotion of anger begins to rage, check it like a hockey player checking an opponent into the boards. Check the anger that is getting out of control. Stop it. Then command the right response.

When you face something which causes anger: Stop and think before you react. Ask yourself, what do I really want in the end: A wake of destruction, to burn relationships and bridges, vengeance, just to look like an idiot who is out of control? No. I want union with God, to love

him and to love my neighbor and even enemies. Keep that in the front of your mind.

Then think, “What can I do in this situation?”

If there is something you can or should do, then act, do what you can, and change what is possible. If this thing is not your responsibility or there is nothing you can do, it is beyond my control, then stay calm and stay out of it.

Remember, when anger rises, check and command.

## **Five**

The virtue of meekness is wonderfully captured by this prayer of Teresa of Avila,

“Let nothing trouble you / Let nothing frighten you  
Everything passes / God never changes  
Patience / Obtains all  
Whoever has God / Wants for nothing  
God alone is enough.”

Practice that and you will be meek!