Controlling Yourself
Code: DN465

"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth"(Matt. 5:5).
The Greek word translated "gentle" in Matthew 5:5 speaks of humility, meekness, and non-retaliation--traits that in our proud society are often equated with weakness or cowardice. But in reality they are virtues that identify kingdom citizens.
The same word was used by the Greeks to describe a gentle breeze, a soothing medicine, or a domesticated colt. Those are examples of power under control: a gentle breeze brings pleasure, but a hurricane brings destruction; a soothing medicine brings healing, but an overdose can kill; a domesticated colt is useful, but a wild horse is dangerous.
Christ Himself is the epitome of gentleness. Even when officially announcing His messiahship to Jerusalem, He humbly entered the city astride a donkey (Matt. 21:5). His behavior amid persecution was exemplary: "Christ . . . suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats" (1 Pet. 2:21-23).
Despite His humility and restraint, Jesus wasn't weak or cowardly. He never defended Himself, but when His Father's house was being desecrated, He made a whip and beat those who were defiling it (John 2:13-16; Matt. 21:12-13). He never shirked from pronouncing judgment on unrepentant sinners, and never compromised His integrity or disobeyed His Father's will.
The hypocritical Jewish religious leaders expected that when Israel's Messiah came He would commended them for their wonderful spirituality. Instead, Jesus condemned them and called them children of the devil (John 8:44). In retaliation they had Him murdered. His power was always under control; theirs wasn't.
Our society has little use for gentleness. The macho, do-your-own-thing mentality characterizes most of our heroes. But you are called to a higher standard. When you pattern your life after Jesus, you will have a significant impact on society and will know true happiness.
Suggestions for Prayer:
Thank God for the virtue of gentleness, which He is producing in you by the power of His Spirit. Follow Christ's example today so that gentleness will mark your character.
For Further Study:
Read the following passages, noting the responsibilities and blessings that accompany self-restraint: Proverbs 16:32, Ephesians 4:1-2, Colossians 3:12, and Titus 3:1-2.

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