

CHARITY AND ITS FRUITS

Jonathan Edwards

Lecture IV – Charity Disposes Us to Meekly Bear the Injuries Received From Others

I Corinthians 13:4 – “Love is patient and kind.” – ESV

“Charity suffereth long, and is kind.” - KJV

Review

Matthew Henry – The Quest for Meekness and Quietness of Spirit.

- I. The Nature of Meekness.
 1. Meekness to God.
 2. Meekness to all men (Titus 3:2).
 - a. Meekness teaches us prudently to govern our own anger whenever anything occurs that is provoking
 - b. Meekness teaches and enables us patiently to bear the anger of others.
- II. The Excellency of Meekness.
 1. Consider how creditable a meek and quiet spirit is.
 2. Consider how comfortable a meek and quiet spirit is.
 3. Consider how profitable a meek and quiet spirit is.
 4. Consider what a preparative it is for something further.

Lecture IV:

1. Take notice of some of the various kinds of injuries that we may receive from others.
 - Unfairness and dishonesty in dealings; being fraudulent and deceitful; leading others to act in the dark; taking advantage of ignorance; not fulfilling promises and engagements; aiming at nothing but just to meet the letter of one’s engagements.
 - Reproaching or speaking evil of others behind their backs; spreading false reports; misrepresentation; exaggerating faults and setting them to be greater than they really are; speaking of others in unfair and unjust manner.
 - Entertaining mean thoughts or low esteem of others; contempt of others in one’s heart; injuring others by words (outflow of bad thoughts);
 - Mistreatment and actions toward others; unfairly treating subordinates; denying respect and honor due a superior; selfish spirit resulting in no regard to the good or benefit of a neighbor; manifesting a haughty and proud spirit; exercising a willful spirit; cherishing a wicked spirit against someone; spirit of envy against someone; spirit of revenge; holding a grudge in one’s heart.
2. Show what is meant by **meekly** bearing such injuries.
 - a. The nature of the duty of meekly bearing the injuries we suffer from others.
 1. Injuries offered should be borne without doing anything to revenge them.
 2. Injuries should be borne with the continuance of love in the heart, and without those inward emotions and passions that tend to interrupt and destroy it.
 3. Injuries should be borne without losing the quietness and repose of our own minds and hearts.
 4. In many cases when we are injured, we should be willing to suffer much in our interests and feelings for the sake of peace, rather than do what we have opportunity, and perhaps the right, to do in defending ourselves.
 - b. Why it is called long-suffering, or suffering long.
 1. We ought meekly to bear not only a small injury, but also a good deal of injurious treatment from others.

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2. In some cases, we should be willing to suffer a great while in our interests, before we improve opportunities of righting ourselves.
3. How that love, which is the sum of the Christian spirit, will dispose us to do this.
 - a. Love to God and the Lord Jesus Christ has a tendency to dispose us to this.
 1. Love to God disposes us to imitate him, and therefore disposes us to such long-suffering as he manifests. Long-suffering is often spoken of as one of the attributes of God.
 2. Love to God will dispose us thus to express our gratitude for his long-suffering exercised toward us. Love not only disposes to imitate, but it works by gratitude.
 3. Love to God tends to humility, which is one main root of a meek and long-suffering spirit. Love to God, as it exalts him, tends to low thoughts and estimates of ourselves, and leads to a deep sense of our unworthiness and our desert of ill.
 4. Love to God disposes men to have regard to the hand of God in the injuries they suffer, and not only to the hand of man, and meekly to submit to his will therein. Love to God disposes men to see his hand in everything; to own him as the governor of the world, and the director of providence; and to acknowledge his disposal in everything that takes place.
 5. Love to God disposes us meekly to bear injuries from others, because it sets us very much above the injuries of men.
 - b. Love to our neighbor will dispose us to the same.
 1. It exhorts us all to the duty of meekly bearing the injuries that may be received from others.
 - a. Consider the example that Christ has set us—He was a meek and quiet spirit, and of a most long-suffering behavior.
 - b. If we are not disposed meekly to bear injuries, we are not fitted to live in the world, for in it we must expect to meet with many injuries from men.
 - c. In this way we shall be most above injuries.
 - d. The spirit of Christian long-suffering, and of meekness in bearing injuries, is a mark of true greatness of soul.
 - e. The spirit of Christian long-suffering and meekness is commended to us by the example of the saints.
 - f. This is the way to be rewarded with the exercise of the Divine long-suffering toward us.

Discussion:

1. Pray
2. 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 ¹When one of you has a grievance against one another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints? ²Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? ³Do you now know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! ⁴So if you have such cases why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church? ⁵I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers, ⁶but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers? ⁷To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? ⁸But you yourselves wrong and defraud—even your own brothers!”

These verses specifically refer to lawsuits between believers.

How does it relate to our chapter on meekly bearing injuries from others?

We interpret Scripture with Scripture. What references are relative?

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3. Read and discuss another excerpt from the Calvin article we discussed last week:

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst on account of righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for mercy will be shown them (Matt. 5:5-7).

The meek will inherit the earth. That is a notion which the human mind cannot entertain. Instead, it is commonly said that all who are gracious, sincere and long-suffering are poor fools; they would do better retaliating than allowing their good nature to be abused. Nevertheless, what Jesus elsewhere declares is true: the best and most preferable course is to maintain our sincerity, to practice patient endurance when we are maligned, not to render evil for evil but to overcome evil with good. If we do that, we will have found the one true way by which we may possess the earth. What, after all, do the bold and brutal seek, when men tremble to see them and dread their coming? Is not their aim to possess the earth, to rule it as a tyrant? Yes, that is what they covet for themselves. Meekness & Mercy - John Calvin
https://www.the-highway.com/Calvin_meek

4. Pray

Proverbs 19:11 “Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.”