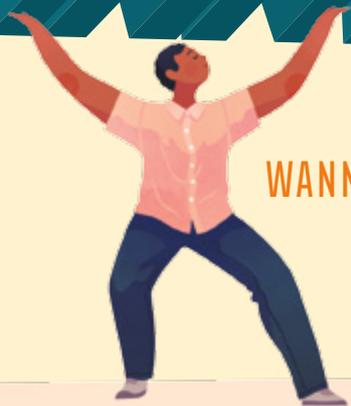


8 WAYS

MEEKNESS
IS NOT
WEAKNESS



WANNA GET STRONG?
GET MEEK!



By Eric B. Murdock

Church Magazines

“Now, let’s be meek about this!”

That’s not something you’re likely to hear very often. That’s because meekness is often associated with being weak and wimpy—a doormat to walk all over. For this reason, meekness may be among the most misunderstood words in the scriptures! But the Savior referred to Himself as “meek and lowly in heart” (Matthew 11:29). As His disciples, shouldn’t we also try to be meek?

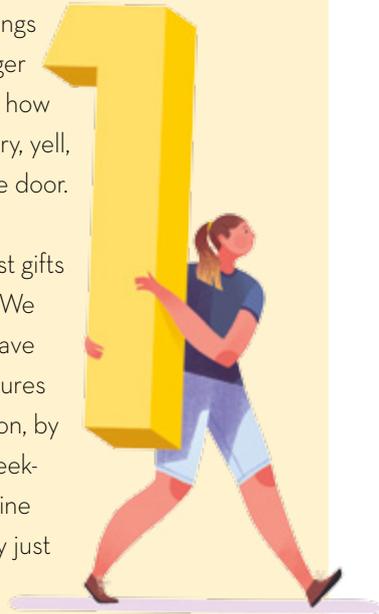
Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said: “Meekness is strong, not weak; active, not passive; courageous, not timid; restrained, not excessive; modest, not self-aggrandizing; and gracious, not brash. A meek person is not easily provoked, pretentious, or overbearing and readily acknowledges the accomplishments of others.”¹

Meekness is an attribute of the Savior that’s desperately needed today. Here are eight ways meekness is a strength, not a weakness.

THE MEEK HAVE SELF-CONTROL

There are going to be days when things don’t go your way. If, say, your younger sibling gets on your nerves one day, how do you respond? You could get angry, yell, storm off to your room, and slam the door. But not if you’re meek.

One of Heavenly Father’s greatest gifts is the freedom to act for ourselves. We can control how we act. We don’t have to yell or scream. Instead, the scriptures say we should interact “by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned” (Doctrine and Covenants 121:41). Or we may just need to walk away.



THE MEEK ARE HUMBLE AND TEACHABLE

When I was learning to drive, my dad wanted to teach me how to jump-start a car. With jumper cables in hand, he opened the hood of our car and told me where the cables go on the engine.

“Yeah, I already know how to do it, Dad!” I said, even though I really didn’t.

A short time later, my friend’s car battery died. He asked if I could give his car a jump. I grabbed the jumper cables from my trunk, looked at my friend’s car, and just stood there. I had no clue how to jump-start a car. At that moment, I wished I had been humble enough to listen to my dad.

When we’re humble, we’re teachable. When we’re teachable, we learn. Learning brings knowledge, skill, progress—and strength.

We’re here to learn and prepare for eternal life—something way more important than how to use jumper cables. And our Heavenly Father has a lot to teach us about it. He promises the humble that He will lead them by the hand (see Doctrine and Covenants 112:10). Being humble and teachable is essential to our progress and happiness.

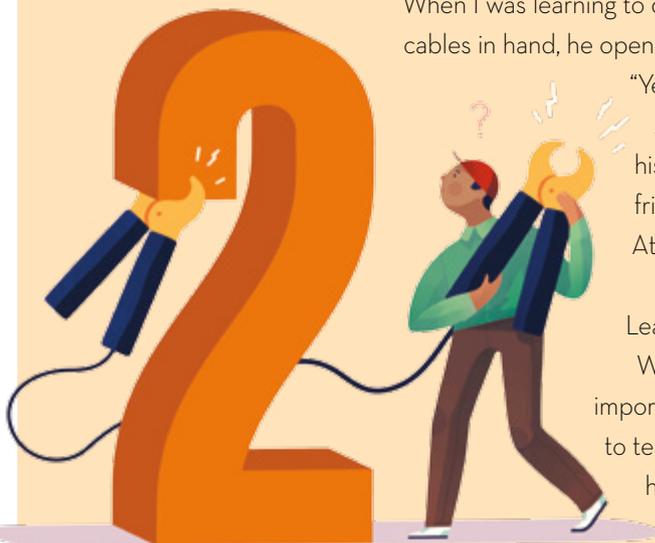


ILLUSTRATION BY JAROM VOGEL



THE MEEK ARE BOLD

The Book of Mormon provides a great example of how meekness and boldness work together. Abinadi boldly taught and testified before King Noah that if he and his people did not repent, they would be brought into bondage. This made King Noah mad.

He ordered that Abinadi be killed.

But King Noah's men couldn't touch Abinadi because the Spirit of the Lord was upon him. He continued to deliver his message with power and authority from God.

Because Abinadi would not deny his words, he was sentenced to death by fire. Through all of this, Abinadi was both bold and meek. Because he was meek, he feared God more than man and boldly fulfilled his mission, no matter what might happen to him.

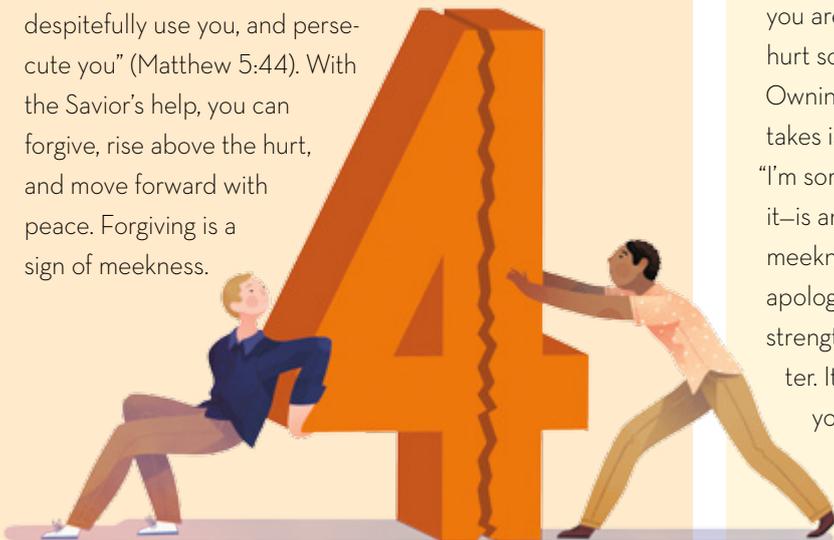
You can be bold too. You can boldly stand up and testify of what you know to be true. As you do so, you show meekness because you are willing to follow the Savior.



THE MEEK FORGIVE

Has someone hurt your feelings or mistreated or disrespected you? It can be hard to forgive and let it go. But if we don't forgive, bitterness and anger can grow and become a very heavy burden.

The Savior taught us to forgive. He said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). With the Savior's help, you can forgive, rise above the hurt, and move forward with peace. Forgiving is a sign of meekness.



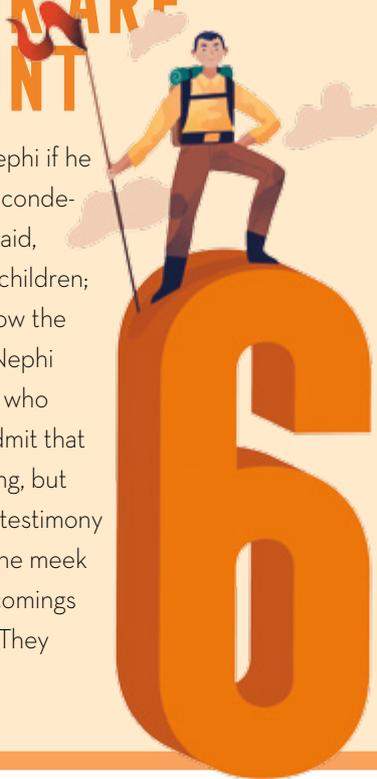
THE MEEK SAY "I'M SORRY"

There might be times when you are the one who has hurt someone's feelings. Owning up to your mistakes is not easy, but saying "I'm sorry"—and meaning it—is an important part of meekness. A genuine apology requires strength of character. It shows that you're willing to make things right when you've done wrong.



THE MEEK ARE CONFIDENT

When the Spirit asked Nephi if he knew the meaning of the condescension of God, Nephi said, “I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things” (1 Nephi 11:17). Like Nephi, those who are meek are willing to admit that they don’t know everything, but they’re confident in their testimony of things they do know. The meek acknowledge their shortcomings but don’t dwell on them. They trust in Heavenly Father.



▶ Can you think of times in the Savior’s life when He showed meekness?
How did the Savior show how meekness brings confidence?
How did meekness help the Savior serve others? Forgive others?

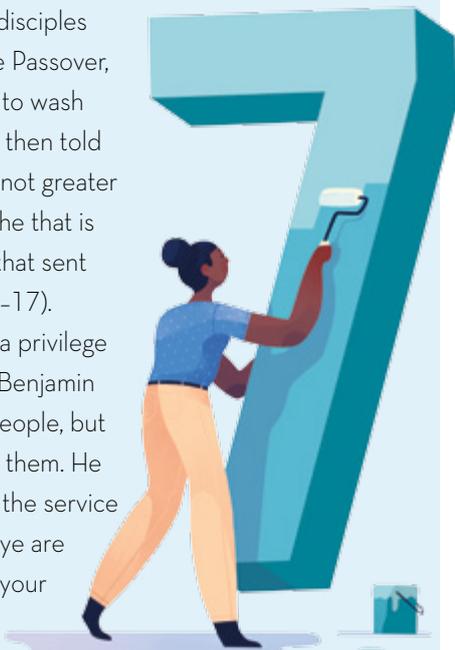
THE MEEK HAVE THE SPIRIT WITH THEM

Meekness is a fruit, or result, of having the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22-23). At the same time, meekness also brings the Spirit into our lives (see Moroni 8:26). We should strive to have the Spirit with us in all we do. Submitting ourselves to being guided and directed by the Spirit shows our willingness to follow the Savior throughout our lives. This quality is at the heart of meekness—and brings us great strength.



THE MEEK SERVE OTHERS

When Jesus and His disciples were gathered for the Passover, Jesus took a moment to wash His disciples’ feet. He then told them, “The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him” (see John 13:12-17). The meek consider it a privilege to serve others. King Benjamin was a ruler over his people, but he took time to serve them. He said, “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17).



Walk in Meekness

Being meek might seem challenging, but we are promised that we are not alone in our efforts. The Savior taught, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:29). He also said, “Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me” (Doctrine and Covenants 19:23).

Elder Bednar has said: “Meekness is an attribute developed through desire, the righteous exercise of moral agency, and striving always to retain a remission of our sins. It also is a spiritual gift for which we appropriately can seek.”² We can learn what it means to be meek. We can also feel the peace and joy that comes from humbly living His gospel. **NE**

NOTES

1. David A. Bednar, Apr. 2018 general conference.
2. David A. Bednar, Apr. 2018 general conference.