

# A MANLY ATTITUDE

Pastor Patton | 16 Mar 2021

To many guys, being manly means being macho. A macho man is strong and tough: he can withstand all manner of discomfort and hardship, and he won't complain. He's cool: he doesn't show emotion, but he'll fight you if challenged or insulted. He's self-reliant: he won't ever expose any weakness, or become indebted to you. He's proud: he has no superiors, and anyone who suggests that his self-image is a lie will face the consequences. And he's also pretty handy with a chainsaw.

For macho men, there is only one alternative to being macho: being a pansy. A pansy is weak and soft. Deep down, the pansy is still a little boy. He always complains and bemoans his weakness. He's always trying to get other people to do the hard work instead of him. He has no self-respect. He lets people walk all over him.

Macho men have at least one thing right: no man should ever want to be a pansy. But—chainsaw prowess aside—the macho man is a distortion of masculinity too. Over against both of these, we have the teaching and example of the true man, Jesus Christ.

Jesus taught, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt 5:5; cf. Ps 37:11). The instant we use the word "meek," we need to explain its true, biblical meaning. It does not mean "mousy." It is not a synonym for "pansy." Rather, biblical meekness means *a gentle willingness to surrender our will for the good of another*. As we will see, biblical "meekness" is at the heart of true manliness.

Here are some characteristics of biblical meekness, and therefore, true manliness:

## **Meekness is honest about weakness.**

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## **Meekness is gentle toward others in need.**

While the macho man domineers, the gentle man says, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ... for I am gentle and lowly in heart" (Matt 11:28-29). The macho man despises the weak, but Jesus does not break a bruised reed or quench a smoldering wick (Matt 12:20; Isa 42:3). *You don't need to prove you are stronger than others to be a true man.*

## **Meekness is strong and tough—in the Lord.**

Like the macho man, the meek man does not complain and is willing to endure great hardship, but for very different reasons. The macho man is trying to prove something, but the meek man is trying to *accomplish* something—namely, the glory of God and the good of our neighbor. Like Jesus, we surrender our bodies and souls to great toil and self-denial *for the sake of love* (Mark 8:34; 10:45). *Christ makes you able to endure pain so others might thrive.*

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- How does Jesus' life show us what "meekness" really means?
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# A MANLY ATTITUDE

Pastor Patton | 16 Mar 2021

To many guys, being manly means being macho. A macho man is strong and tough: he can withstand all manner of discomfort and hardship, and he won't complain. He's cool: he doesn't show emotion, but he'll fight you if challenged or insulted. He's self-reliant: he won't ever expose any weakness, or become indebted to you. He's proud: he has no superiors, and anyone who suggests that his self-image is a lie will face the consequences. And he's also pretty handy with a chainsaw.

For macho men, there is only one alternative to being macho: being a pansy. A pansy is weak and soft. Deep down, the pansy is still a little boy. He always complains and bemoans his weakness. He's always trying to get other people to do the hard work instead of him. He has no self-respect. He lets people walk all over him.

Macho men have at least one thing right: no man should ever want to be a pansy. But—chainsaw prowess aside—the macho man is a distortion of masculinity too. Over against both of these, we have the teaching and example of the true man, Jesus Christ.

Jesus taught, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt 5:5; cf. Ps 37:11). The instant we use the word "meek," we need to explain its true, biblical meaning. It does not mean "mousy." It is not a synonym for "pansy." Rather, biblical meekness means *a gentle willingness to surrender our will for the good of another*. As we will see, biblical "meekness" is at the heart of true manliness.

Here are some characteristics of biblical meekness, and therefore, true manliness:

## **Meekness is honest about weakness.**

A macho man never asks for help, but Jesus, "in the days of his flesh, ... offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death" (Heb 5:7; cf. 1 Cor 2:3). Jesus felt no compulsion to keep up a front, as though he had no needs. Unlike you and me, Jesus would not have been afraid to ask for directions. *One of the manliest things you can do is to honestly confess your weakness and sin to the Lord and to others.*

## **Meekness is gentle toward others in need.**

While the macho man domineers, the gentle man says, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ... for I am gentle and lowly in heart" (Matt 11:28-29). The macho man despises the weak, but Jesus does not break a bruised reed or quench a smoldering wick (Matt 12:20; Isa 42:3). *You don't need to prove you are stronger than others to be a true man.*

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