

Galatians 5:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Analysis

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. Paul completes the fruit-list. "Meekness" (praytēs, πραΰτης)—gentleness, humility, considerateness, strength under control. Not weakness but controlled strength, like a broken horse. Jesus exemplified meekness (Matthew 11:29, 21:5). "Temperance" (enkrateia, ἐγκράτεια)—self-control, discipline, mastery over desires. The capstone: all other fruit requires self-control empowered by the Spirit.

"Against such there is no law" (kata tōn toioutōn ouk estin nomos, κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος)—law doesn't oppose these. This is brilliant conclusion: law forbids vice and commands virtue, but can't produce virtue. The Spirit produces what law commands but can't create. Those manifesting Spirit-fruit fulfill law's intent without being under law's jurisdiction. Law has no case against love, joy, peace, etc. Walking in the Spirit naturally accomplishes what law-keeping attempted but failed. This demolishes the Judaizers: why embrace law when the Spirit produces what law demanded?

Historical Context

Self-control (enkrateia) was prized in Greek philosophy as cardinal virtue achieved through discipline and willpower. Paul agrees it's essential but insists it's Spirit-produced, not self-generated. Meekness was despised in Greco-Roman honor-shame culture as weakness; Paul, following Jesus, exalts it as strength under divine control. This fruit-list is countercultural, valuing qualities the world despises (humility, gentleness, patience) and producing them supernaturally. The

concluding phrase refutes legalism: Spirit-fruit fulfills law; law has no quarrel with Spirit-produced character.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Spirit-produced self-control differ from mere willpower and self-discipline?
2. What does biblical meekness—strength under control—look like in your relationships and circumstances?
3. How does producing Spirit-fruit fulfill the law's intent while freeing you from law as operating principle?

Interlinear Text

πραότης,	ἐγκράτεια·	κατὰ	τῶν	τοιούτων	οὐκ	ἔστιν
Meekness	temperance	against	G3588	such	no	there is
G4236	G1466	G2596		G5108	G3756	G2076

νόμος

law
G3551

Additional Cross-References

1 Timothy 1:9 (Word): Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

Acts 24:25 (Parallel theme): And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

Titus 2:2 (Parallel theme): That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

Titus 1:8 (Parallel theme): But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

1 Corinthians 9:25 (Parallel theme): And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

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