

*Fr. Perozich comments —*

*Defining terms and clear explanations are important to me so that I can understand and integrate concepts and knowledge.*

*Denise Trull, in this article from [SpiritualDirection.com](http://SpiritualDirection.com), offers understanding of the beatitudes of Purity of Heart and of Meekness.*

*My experience of this age in the church and in the world is of people who are loud and proud about their opinions, derogating others who are not on board with their worldly tendencies, people in need of the development of virtues of purity of heart and of meekness.*

*I have a long way to go in my own spiritual development in spite of having lived into my 7th decade of life as a Christian.*

*May this help other readers as well.*



## **Purity And Meekness For All**

**MARCH 17, 2024  
DENISE TRULL**



There are two beatitudes I think I have had all wrong for a long time. Being ‘pure of heart’ and being ‘meek’.

I made a quick assumption, conscious or not, that a person is simply born with those two natural propensities by temperament and if you didn’t have them – well, that was the luck of the draw, so to speak. And if you did have them, then blessed are you.

However, Jesus is talking to thousands of people in His sermon on the mount – all types, all temperaments, each of whom, He says, will not be blessed until they have purity of heart and meekness – and above all, Jesus wants us, each one, to be blessed; the loud, impatient ones, the outgoing ones, the doers, the shakers, all of these, as well as the naturally shy and retiring and gentle ones. **We are each called to those two necessary beatitudes.** So, I put away my shallow assumptions and dug a bit deeper.

I was helped in my quest in a most striking way just last year. I met a woman, let’s call her G, who is **gentle, kind, patient, and has a life completely integrated with her faith. She speaks quite naturally about her beliefs to young and old**

**alike – never cloying or sentimental or self-righteous** – I saw this in action and marveled. She is very matter-of-fact in her beliefs. She doesn't water any of the hard things down, but states them simply; as though it were up to you now to wrestle with them in your own soul if you needed to, and not with her personally. She was, quite simply, only the messenger.

There is not one ounce of guile in her. She doesn't brag or wheedle for compliments, but most impressively – she does not depreciate herself. She is an artist by trade. She will tell you when she did a good job and when she did not. Quite simply. She is sure of the difference, and this solid self-knowledge gives her an air of peace. She has a voice and a manner like I would suppose Our Lady's to be. Steady and naturally measured. My initial instinct, when I first met her, was to protect her from this nasty, jaded world! She seemed so pure of heart, innocent and vulnerable somehow; as though she might be too fragile and shining to navigate this world of murky intentions lurking all about her. To my growing surprise, though, I surmised quite wrongly that she needed my or anyone's protection.

**Purity of heart is a beatitude hard won.** If you have it, it presupposes many battles have been fought within. Purity is a word that comes from the Greek: Katharos. It is a word that means pure, but a purity **gained through, and even presupposing, fire and extensive pruning.** Heart comes from the Greek: Kardeeah, the spiritual center of things where you think, love, have a sense of purpose, and where character resides. So, the fire must be set to those things – all the things we so easily use more for serving ourselves than for serving God – our thoughts, our attractions, our love of praise and competing for it in the world, human respect – all the best of our heart is covered, alas, in the dross of fallen human nature. **We become pure of heart when the dross is slowly and painfully removed by the fire of grace through suffering.** It is the only way for each of us.

What is left when the blaze has died down is a heart that loves God – simply and in all things. No duplicity, no frustrating struggles back and forth between serving Him and yet catering to the world. The person at the far end of this firing process is quite peaceful, self-possessed, uncomplicated and beautiful. G is such a person. I just happened to meet her later in her process.

As an artist, it is clear to see that her talent belongs completely to God. He is, as a matter of fact, the subject of her paintings. One would think she had always been like this, but once you hear her story, you realize she came to this simplicity after many long and winding roads and so many leaps of absolute faith it astounds me she is still so calm. She has children, a husband, a mortgage. She went to college determined for an engineering degree and found it to be an utterly terrible fit. Suddenly out to sea, she surprisingly opened her heart to the possibility of pursuing the fine art of oil painting without ever having really painted seriously before. She was filled with a strong conviction that God wanted this gift of her, and it carried her. But surely she struggled. With doubts. With other people's nay saying. Perhaps with others trying to attach themselves to her rising star for selfish reasons of their own. She got married to a man she loved who lost his job. She went through the pain and struggle of childbirth several times and worried along with her husband about where the money was going to come from if she continued to paint. Surely she fought many, many battles with herself not to abandon the art she knew God had asked of her. The struggles were many and real.

The one obvious thing G seems to have done was to allow God to light her on fire. She had **the courage to let the dross be burned away. This is a step many of us are not willing to take** – or at least not as radically as she did. **But when the fire died down, there was this gentled human being – simple, integrated, in control of herself and with a right understanding of her gifts and her faults shining with**

**the victory bought by suffering.** It is a beauty I have witnessed just by being in the same room with her. Purity of heart is what I always see.

**The pure of heart are magnificent to behold. Not in any need of protection. They have fought the beast and won. They live now only in the orbit of God.**

They live now only in the orbit of God.

Then there is meekness. **Meekness is defined as “having the right or the power to do something but refraining for the benefit of someone else.”** Jesus was the most meek, of course. **Meekness is a choice to refrain in order that a greater good be the outcome.** Meekness is not weakness. **It is a powerful choice to hold back our own opinions, our words, our reactions to being hurt or maligned,** not because we are self-doubting and self-depreciating or afraid of human respect – **but because we know who we are before God and we choose to act in love like him.** It is not naive to be meek. It is not a virtue that lets people run roughshod all over you because you are too shy to say anything. It chooses always to be calm under fire and to hold its tongue. Try it for about one hour and you will know how very difficult it is to be truly meek – to be silent before injustice or persecution so that love will reign. Having the wisdom to know when to speak up but to speak up quietly and contained. G. had this as well. When ‘armchair artists’ would give her “pointers” on her paintings of the saints and Our Lady, even questioning the Theology of them, she just smiled her benign little smile. She ever and always took no offense. She listened far longer than I ever could without a tart rejoinder, to these obviously lesser intellects and even lesser artists -with an open face and mind. She always said she took away wisdom from each person who commented on her work. I believed her. She never defended herself. The humility and self-restraint this requires are huge.

**I think Thomas Aquinas had that kind of meekness when his fellow monks made fun of him. He was integrated and knew himself before God.** He had the wisdom to refrain from rebuttal in order to love his brothers and lead them to an understanding beyond their thoughtless and jaded mirth. He probably brought many to God through this quiet, smiling meekness that took their jokes in a good-natured charity. Many saints, of all sorts, acquired this meekness. Francis de Sales was a fiery sort when he started out, but love for God turned him into the meekest and kindest of men. St Margaret Mary, St Bernadette, even St. Paul at the end of his life – **all bought the treasure of meekness through long-suffering and humility.**

**Purity of Heart and meekness.** I will now know better than to want to shield and protect those who have them, for they have no need of my protection – **they belong to the mightiest of soldiers in the Church militant.** The angels will rise up and call them blessed.

And blessed are we all called to be.

[https://spiritualdirection.com/2024/03/17/purity-and-meekness-for-all?mkt\\_tok=NDI3LUxFUSowNjYAAAGSTKRUGQuqBkEHFxiZkCGmYp8jBcHfkieUwz5anJKtC5I-FXpuoLoLirz2ddOfe1rPdISJU9sFHGMjaWs9aUBAJyaKudM\\_hyoDhbcAgMSr](https://spiritualdirection.com/2024/03/17/purity-and-meekness-for-all?mkt_tok=NDI3LUxFUSowNjYAAAGSTKRUGQuqBkEHFxiZkCGmYp8jBcHfkieUwz5anJKtC5I-FXpuoLoLirz2ddOfe1rPdISJU9sFHGMjaWs9aUBAJyaKudM_hyoDhbcAgMSr)