

The Fruit of the Spirit: GENTLENESS

Having or showing a mild, kind, or tender temperament or character. Also sensitive, courteous, moderate in action, not harsh.

Gentleness involves having a humble opinion of one's self, along with the inner strength to control one's emotions, tongue, and behaviour. Gentleness is not high minded.

In our society humility, meekness and gentleness are not the kind of words used by people who want to succeed in the world. More likely, people who pursue these characteristics will be called "wimps." We know that the humility and gentleness of Christ, can only be known, seen, felt and experienced by this evil, tough world - **through the lives of God's people.**

We must be careful that we are not tainted by the harshness of the world.

What situations challenge your ability to be gentle?

Learn from the Lord

Matt. 11:29-30 *Jesus said "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest, take my yoke upon you and **learn from me** for I am **gentle** and **humble** in heart and you will find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

It is interesting that Jesus said "**learn from me** for I am gentle...." - the most powerful man who walked this earth declared that he was gentle and we should learn from him.

Jesus demonstrated gentleness at His trial keeping quiet refusing to respond to the accusations. This was evidence of strength not weakness.

Col 3:12-14 *"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **Bear with each other and forgive** whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."*

Paul, was really battling with the lack of godliness in the Corinthian Church, he used some very strong words to rebuke them and convict them of their sinful ways, yet he chose to appeal to them through the meekness and gentleness of Christ Himself.

2 Cor 10:1 *"By the **meekness and gentleness** of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am "timid" when face to face with you, but "bold" when away!"*

Paul looks to the character of 'The Man' Jesus Christ. Yes He was wholly God and yet during His time on earth yet He chose to lay aside His godliness and function as a man then Scripture can say:

Heb 2:18 *"Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."*

This is another example of His goodness to us. Praise God it is His desire that we take on the godly characteristics and Holy Spirit is always there to help us!

The power of the tongue

Prov 15:1 *A gentle answer turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up wrath.*

We are called to be a people who **respond** to situations not **react** to them. So often letting them know exactly what I think is not the answer. Do you have a humble attitude? Ask the Holy Spirit to bring correction – He is the best Minister and will most likely do it more far more gently.

Prov 12:18 *Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. NIV*

We need to be a people who can have a **full and frank discussion** without loosing our temper. Top managers in industry have been shown to have a high EQ – Emotional Quota.

Notice below how Jesus instructs us to use a **gentle method** for sorting out offences.

Matt 18:15 *If your brother sins against you, go and rebuke him in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he won't listen, take one or two more with you, so that by the testimony of two or three witnesses every fact may be established. If he pays no attention to them, tell the church.*

Instructions on gentleness

Peter, who was noted for his strong character and sharp reactions, matured into saying:

1 Peter 3:15 *“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”*

2 Timothy 2:24-25 *The Lord's slave must not quarrel, but must be gentle to everyone, able to teach, and be patient, instructing his opponents with gentleness.*

Eph 4:2 *“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient bearing with one another in love.”*

1 Peter 3:4 *Wives win over your husbands with an imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very valuable in God's eyes. For in the past, the holy women who hoped in God also beautified themselves in this way, submitting to their own husbands.*

1 Tim 3: 1-5 *“Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, **not violent but gentle**, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect.”*

Proverbs 12:16 *Fools show their annoyance at once, but the prudent overlook an insult.*

Was Jesus gentle when he cleared the temple? Are there times when we should not be gentle?

The presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts is the most precious part of our lives. When we welcome Him in our hearts we will produce His fruit.

Wise thoughts have been thought many times; but to make them truly ours, we must think them

over again honestly, till they take root in our experience.

Matt 5:5 *Blessed are the **gentle**, because they will inherit the earth.*