

Community Group Discussion Questions

“The Fruit of Faithfulness”

Galatians 5:22-23, 2 Kings 5:1-17

Sermon Series Title: “The Fruit of the Spirit”

Sermon Series Summary: In Christ, we have received new hearts and new life. With this new life, God bears the Fruit of the Spirit. It’s not something we do. It’s something that God grows within us through His Spirit.

Passage Setting: 1 and 2 Kings take us from the time of King Solomon to the Babylonian exile and the fall of Jerusalem. We see Israel and Judah fall deeper into sin with subsequent generations, until the LORD finally lets them go. Prophets like Elijah and his disciple, Elisha, are raised at this time to rebuke and turn Israel back to the Lord. We also see the redemptive plan of God, looking forward to Christ.

Summary: We are continuing our Fruit of the Spirit series on the 8th fruit of Gentleness. We see that gentleness is peaceful patience, rooted in meekness and humility. Its opposite is harshness, rooted in prideful entitlement. Its counterfeit is a tolerance, rooted in apathy, inferiority, or self-righteousness. We are able to be gentle, because we are humbled by the grace of our gentle Savior.

Central Truth: *“Be gentle as God has been gentle towards us in Christ.”*

Sermon Points:

1. The Opposite of Gentleness
2. The Root of Gentleness
3. The Actions of Gentleness
4. The Gentle Savior

Opening Question:

1. Is gentleness an asset or a liability in our culture today? Why or why not?

(Answers may vary.)

We are looking at our 8th Fruit of the Spirit, Gentleness, as we look at the story of Naaman, the Syrian commander with leprosy.

Read Galatians 5:22-23, 2 Kings 5:1-17

Community Group Discussion Questions

1. What is the opposite of gentleness? What is counterfeit gentleness?

(The opposite of gentleness is harshness, rooted in prideful entitlement. We live in a culture where it's hard to be gentle. We talk about politics, religion, abortion, critical race theory, homosexuality, transgenderism, vaccines, etc, and it's hard to be gentle, especially online.

This harshness is rooted in prideful entitlement. We believe we are great, and we deserve/are better. We feel like we have a right to treat others this way, because we are better, smarter, more correct, more mature, etc.

Harshness is just the expression that even if we are "right," we are not right in our souls. It's because of our sin and pride. We are frustrated with the futility of ourselves, others, and this world. We tear others down to build ourselves up and to feel better about ourselves.

Counterfeit gentleness is a tolerance that is rooted in apathy (we don't care), inferiority (we're lower based on our work), and self-righteousness (we're too good to be bothered enough to be harsh and frustrated). It's still rooted in the self, and it is not true love and gentleness.)

2. What does gentleness look like?

(Gentleness is a peaceful patience, rooted in meekness and humility. It's a selflessness, completely relying upon the Lord and building others up. We are called to gentleness all over Scripture. We see that gentleness is a mark of God's people.

It's rooted in meekness and humility. We know that it's denying our status, righteousness, privileges, significance, and earnings. It's becoming a little child, in humble dependence on God, and it's adopting God's heart to build others up.

Gentleness forgives and is merciful. Gentleness seeks to save and help others. Gentleness is not thinking of the self but is thinking of neighbor. Gentleness is strength in the face of adversity, knowing that we are held by the mercy and grace of God.

Gentleness is submission to the grace and love of God. It's a submission to His will, ways, and time. It's a desire to glorify God in all places and at all times. It seeks wisdom to live as faithfully as possible.)

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3. How is Jesus gentle toward us? How does that affect our hearts?

(We see Jesus' gentleness in His heart toward us. In Matthew 11:29, He calls Himself gentle and lowly, and He welcomes all who are weary and heavy-laden. We don't need to unburden and cleanse ourselves to be qualified to come to Jesus. That burden and our need are the qualifications to come to Jesus. It's His delight to embrace broken sinners.

The gospel is the goodness of His gentle and lowly heart toward us. He took our burdens of sin and shame on the cross and paid it all. He left all riches, fame, and power to purchase us. He laid them all down to gain and save us. He received the harsh judgment of God on the cross for us, so that God may be gentle toward us in Christ.)

Final Thoughts: *We don't need to be harsh to justify ourselves or to punish others out of our pride. Jesus is our justification and worth. Jesus is the One who was punished for our pride. We don't need to be frustrated by the futility of our sin, because Jesus is the One who took on all futility and defeated sin and death. We cannot stand on our own righteousness, because we are undone by the gospel, loved by our God, and touched by Christ's gentleness. And once we have experienced the gentleness of Christ deep down in our souls, then we are empowered to be gentle toward others.*