

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.

"We are in our "Fruit of the Spirit" sermon series, and through this series, we see that our growth is not quantified by the works we accomplish but is defined by the fruit God's Spirit bears within us through His Son."

Call: Psalm 103:13-14

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

Title: "The Fruit of Gentleness"

Next Week's Call: Psalm 103:15-18

Next Week's Text: Galatians 5:22-23, Genesis 39:1-12

Next Week's Title: "The Fruit of Self-Control"

Future Calls: Psalm 103:19, 20-22

Future Titles:

Fallen Condition Focus: We are not gentle. Instead, we find ourselves being harsh, rooted in pride.

Christ redeeming FCF: Christ is the one who is gentle and lowly, receiving us as broken sinners but also accomplishing the work of salvation for us.

Central Truth: "Be gentle as God has been gentle towards us in 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.

Reflective Questions:

1. What is the opposite of gentleness? What is counterfeit gentleness?
2. What does gentleness look like?

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

I. Introduction

- A. Hook
- B. Transition
- C. Proposition
- D. Points

II. The Opposite of Gentleness (vv. 1, 11-12, 15b)

A. The opposite of gentleness is harshness, rooted in prideful entitlement.

- 1. Hard to be gentle in our times today- politics, religion, abortion, critical race theory, homosexuality, transgenderism, vaccines, etc.

B. Vv. 11-12- Naaman's angry response (harshness) after Elisha's humiliating instructions to be healed/saved

C. V. 15b- Naaman wants to pay for his salvation.

D. This harsh response is rooted in prideful entitlement.

- 1. V. 1- he is a great man with favor (with king), power (armies), and money (gift). He is angry, because he believes he deserves a welcome, a performance, and control (payment, testing instead of dipping).
- 2. Not gentle response- belief that we are entitled or better than your neighbor; "they're so ignorant, foolish, stupid, sinful, etc." We deserve more or better. We have a right to treat others this way, because we are better, smarter, more correct, more mature, etc. Or that harsh response is coming out of a deep insecurity that we are not as good as we think we are... so we try to justify our worth through our harshness.
- 3. His leprosy shows that the things of this earth do not satisfy or save. We can have the whole world and still forfeit our soul. We can feel proud or entitled, but that will only bring death to the soul. And harshness is how that death and dissatisfaction is lived out. Even though we may be "right," we are still not right in our souls because of our pride and sin.
 - a) Harshness is the expression that even if we are "right," we are not right in our souls.
 - b) Frustration with futility, tear others down to build ourselves up... to feel better about ourselves.

E. Counterfeit gentleness is a tolerance, rooted in apathy (we don't care), inferiority (we are not worthy, still relying on the self), and self-righteousness (we're too good or mature to be bothered enough to be harsh and frustrated).

It's still rooted in the self, and it's not true love and gentleness. The king in v. 7 seems like he is humble, but his response is based on himself: his inferiority and unbelief.

III. The Root of Gentleness (vv. 9-11, 14, 16)

- A. Gentleness- peaceful patience, rooted in meekness and humility. It's a selflessness, completely relying upon the Lord and building others up.
 - 1. Many bible verses that call us to be gentle and meek (Titus 3:2, Proverbs 15:1, 2 Timothy 2:25, Galatians 6:1, Ephesians 4:2, etc.).
 - 2. Mark of God's people
- B. Leadership today- CEO, commander of armies, athletes
 - 1. Kobe Bryant, Michael Jordan- drive to win, even at the cost of gentleness; Naaman before being humbled
- C. Rooted in meekness and humility
 - 1. Elisha doesn't meet him in person (denying status), doesn't perform for him (denying ritual righteousness), and tells him to dip in the Jordan (denying privilege and significance- anyone can do this).
 - 2. He is not allowed to pay for this salvation (denying the ability to earn one's salvation).
- D. Naaman has to humble himself in order to be saved
 - 1. Flesh- little child; heart state in the gospel
- E. The gospel denies our status, our works righteousness, our privilege, our significance, and our earning. It calls us to be like a child and receive for us to be saved. Luke 4:27- the great grace of the gospel, saving Naaman

IV. The Actions of Gentleness (vv. 2-3, 17)

- A. This little girl (foreigner, exile, female, servant) with nothing has the boldness to share with Naaman's wife the way of healing and salvation.
 - 1. Naaman is an enemy who kidnaped her and used her, and yet, she shares news to help him. Gentleness forgives and is merciful. Gentleness thinks not of the self but of neighbor.
 - 2. Gentleness is strength in the face of adversity, knowing that we are held by the mercy and grace of God. This girl shows us that anyone anywhere can share the gospel with anyone without fear or insecurity.
- B. After refusing to let Naaman pay for the healing, he does not respond with harshness, but he responds with submission, knowing he can never pay back God... submission to God's ways... will... when.
- C. Naaman brings soil with him, because he is now a believer (v. 15). He is not going to offer any burnt offering or sacrifice to any god, except the LORD (v. 17). Also, he seeks wisdom for navigating this unbelieving world (vv. 18-19).

1. Gentleness worships the Lord and submits to Him. Gentleness seeks wisdom on how to navigate life as worshipfully as possible.

V. The Gentle Savior (v. 13)

- A. Great word- good word (gospel)
- B. Gentleness is not just how Jesus is, but who He is.
- C. Only one place where Jesus talks about his heart (Matthew 11:29), and He calls Himself gentle and lowly.
- D. Our burden is what qualifies us to come (p. 20- Gentle and Lowly). He loves to embrace broken sinners. We don't need to unburden and cleanse ourselves to come to Him.
- E. He is the One who took our burdens and paid for it on the cross.
- F. He is the One who had all power, fame, and riches, but left them all to purchase us.
- G. He laid it all down to give us everything... to save us... to gain us.
- H. He is the One who received the harsh judgment of God on the cross for us... so that He may be gentle toward us. He considered us. He was selfless to build us up and lift us out of the grave of our hearts.
- I. 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.
- J. We cannot stand on our self-righteousness, because we are undone by the gospel, loved by our God, touched by His gentleness. And once we have experienced gospel gentleness deep down in our souls, then we are empowered to be gentle toward others.