

The Fruit of the Spirit Is Gentleness

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Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
Gal 5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

I. Gentleness [softness of manners; mildness of temper; sweetness of disposition]

A. The same Greek word is translated *goodness* and *kindness*—As it describes God

Rom 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his **goodness** and forbearance and longsuffering...

Eph 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his kindness* toward us through Christ Jesus.

Tit 3:4 But after that the **kindness** and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

Tit 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Tit 3:6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

Tit 3:7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

B. The same Greek word is translated *good*—In reference to what fallen man has lost

Rom 3:12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth **good**, no, not one.

C. The same Greek word is translated *kindness*—In reference to how we are to act

Col 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, **kindness**, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Col 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do ye*.

II. Gentleness is a statement concerning the disposition

A. The opposite of gentleness is rudeness

1Sa 25:3 ...Nabal...*was* churlish and evil in his doings...

1Sa 25:10 And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who *is* David? ...

B. The opposite of gentleness is aggression

1Sa 20:33 And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him (*Jonathan, his own son*)...

Luk 9:54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

Luk 9:55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

Luk 22:50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

Luk 22:51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

Joh 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight...

C. Gentleness is a man of war taking off (and giving up) his weapons of war

1Sa 18:4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that *was* upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

D. Gentleness is a disposition that desires to please God above all aspects of self

1Sa 24:4 ...Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

1Sa 24:5 And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him...

E. Gentleness is the courteous kindness of an humble and sweet politeness

Gen 24:19 And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw *water* for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

Joh 20:15 ...Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him...

Joh 20:16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary...

F. Gentleness is moderation (*appropriate mildness, reasonable sweetness*) in situation

Php 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: *and* again I say, Rejoice.

Php 4:5 Let your **moderation** be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand.

Php 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Php 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

G. Gentleness is kindness and peaceableness that has its source in heaven

Jas 3:14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

Jas 3:15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish.

Jas 3:16 For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work.

Jas 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, **gentle**, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

Jas 3:18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

III. Gentleness is the salt of Christianity

Mat 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Col 4:6 Let your speech *be* always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Mar 9:50 Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

Mar 9:41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

Mar 9:42 And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

Mar 9:43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

Mar 9:44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Mar 9:45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

Mar 9:46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Mar 9:47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

Mar 9:48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Mar 9:49 For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

Mar 9:50 Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

IV. Paul and Peter practiced and preached gentleness

1Th 2:7 But we were **gentle** among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

2Ti 2:24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be **gentle** unto all *men*...

Tit 3:2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *but* **gentle**, shewing all meekness unto all men.

1Pe 2:18 Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and **gentle**, but also to the froward.

V. The Almighty Jesus is our best picture of gentleness

Mat 12:18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

Mat 12:19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

Mat 12:20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

1Pe 2:23 ...when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not...

Luk 23:34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do...

HAS AMERICA LOST THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT?

(Excerpts from an article by Matt Lewis)

I'm a Christian and a Conservative. Trump is Making it Terribly Hard to be Both.

...I am a (very flawed) Christian and a (somewhat conflicted) conservative... Increasingly, my faith and my political loyalties are at odds, and sometimes even seem to be mutually exclusive.

Trump's fundamental character deficiencies are part of the problem. We all fall short, but Christians aspire to bring about the fruits of the spirit (love, joy, peace, forbearance [*longsuffering*], kindness [*gentleness*], goodness, faithfulness [*faith*], gentleness [*meekness*] and self-control [*temperance*]). These virtues aren't just out of step in today's society—they are utterly countercultural in Trump's Republican Party.

...I freely admit that I am a sinner in need of grace and constant forgiveness. God's mercy humbles me daily. Donald Trump, however, revels in at least five of the seven deadly sins: pride, greed, lust, envy, and wrath.

As someone who believes protection of the vulnerable extends to the lives of the unborn, switching teams is not an option for me... Progressives are driven by their own set of perverse incentives, and their pursuit of power can be as vicious and cloying as the degradation seen on the right.

Those...who genuinely pursue justice and mercy, have to fight their own temptation to let the politics of the moment shape their faith rather than letting their faith shape their politics. They have their own cross to bear.

Meanwhile, I'm focused on how to align my values and my politics, and that means prioritizing my values—rather than reverse-engineering them to fit my politics.

The dichotomy between this season of peaceful reflection (*Christmas*) and the state of American politics is stark, but it's not new. It is perhaps appropriate that many of us find ourselves politically homeless during this season... Now more than ever, we should reflect on and observe the important rhythms and religious practices that help center and sustain us in an increasingly unpredictable world.

And then, get to work.