

GENTLENESS

2 Timothy 2.24-25

Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but **godliness** has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 1 Timothy 4.7b-8

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **gentleness** and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 2.22-23

Gentleness is somewhat difficult to define. Gentleness is an active trait, describing the ways we react to others. It is born of power, not weakness. We see in Isaiah 40.10, 15, 25-26, 11, that the writer stresses the infiniteness of God's power but also speaks of his gentleness. Do not be afraid that gentleness equates with weakness.

*You give me your shield of victory,
and your right hand sustains me;
you stoop down to make me great.* Psalms 18.35

... and your gentleness makes me great. NASB

Gentleness is stooping down to help someone. God continually stoops down to help us, and he wants us to do the same – to be sensitive to the rights and feelings of others.

*Come unto 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...* Matthew 11.28-29; 21.5; Isaiah 62.11; Zechariah 9.9

For the contemporary believer this kind of Spirit life is particularly challenging because it is so foreign to the modern mind and flies in the teeth of modern thought. But there are a number of areas in which it is crucial that meekness be the watchword.

1. We Need to Gently Respond to the Word of God

*Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and **humbly** (gently) accept the word planted in you, which can save you.* James 1.21

2. We Need to Gently Communicate the Gospel – External Focus

*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, keeping a clear conscience...* 1 Peter 3.15-16

3. We Need to Deal Gently with Others in the Church – Internally Healthy

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! I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 1 Corinthians 10.1-3

4. We Need to be Gentle in Our Marriages

1 Peter 3.1-4, 7-8

5. We Need to be Gentle in Positions of Leadership

*And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him **he must gently instruct**, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.* 2 Timothy 2.24-26

*Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him **gently**. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.* Galatians 6.1-2