



FRUIT(FULL) Gentleness

#newpointefruitfull

Week 9

9 of 10

June 6, 2021

Bottom Line: Gentleness is strength under control.

Icebreaker: Play a game of Pick-Up Sticks or Jenga, games requiring gentle touches. Or each person pick a gentle animal and say why they consider it to be gentle.

Key Verse: Jesus: *“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle (meek) and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”* Matthew 11:29 NIV

When we use the word “gentle” in our conversation about the fruit of the Spirit, we are actually speaking of a quality we don’t hear described very often: “meekness,” which means “yielded.” It literally has the suggestion of “strength under control” and comes from the idea of a wild stallion being broken and trained. Meekness/gentleness is a cooperative spirit, with strength, skill, and passion under control. Our society values life as a “wild and free” stallion, but there is little impact for a life lived that way. It spends all your resources on self, and no one benefits from your gifts. A laser shows how concentrated energy, strength under control, can eradicate kinds of complex cancer or drill a hole in a diamond. Gentleness, or strength under control, is likewise the key to a life of purpose and effectiveness. It is displayed in my attitude, in my behavior, and also in my conversation. A gentle person doesn’t overreact and is not driven by emotion. Gentleness is evident in how we interact with others, and it can only be shaped by the Spirit at work within us. Specifically, gentleness is **STRENGTH CONTROLLED**. It has no need to prove itself; it is simply shown in the fruit of a person’s life. It is **STRENGTH CHanneled**. It is best shown by a person who exercises control over himself and is free from the need to control others. **How does a person develop this vital characteristic?** First, **HUMILITY**. You can’t take any step in the life God intended you to live until you humble yourself. Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it’s putting others first and admitting, “I can’t do this on my own.” You want to use everything you have to utilize this strength to its fullest. Humility will handle your arrogance and aggression that lead to stress. **SUBMISSION**. Submit to **GOD’S WORD** to shape you. Submit to **OTHERS**, meaning I must listen to what others are saying and to what they think, and then give weight to it, even when I feel that I may be right. Meekness/gentleness is formed in the midst of the difficulty of becoming humble and submissive. It cannot happen without those two vital components. Are you tired of hitting a ceiling? Are you stressed more often than not? Do you feel like there’s more to life than what you’ve been experiencing? It could be that you haven’t experienced the power of God through strength under control and channeled for the benefit of others. Surrender to God to develop the power of gentleness in your life.

THINK IT OVER >>>

What was the most significant part of Sunday’s message to you?

Jesus addresses this vital subject in the Sermon on the Mount. First, *blessed are the poor in spirit* acknowledges our condition—spiritual bankruptcy. Next, *blessed are they that mourn* is contrition for our condition. Then, *blessed are the meek* deals with control—we willingly relinquish control, placing ourselves under God’s control. Where in this process do you find yourself? Explain.

A horse that has become meek through training still has the same strength, the same drive, and the same instincts, but now there’s a bridle. What’s the spiritual equivalent? How does the Holy Spirit’s work retain YOU while developing new character?

God neither releases us to run wild and free, nor does He disable or dampen us. He gentles us. Who do you know who exhibits this? Explain.

The best use of power is to use it over our own lives. Discuss.

LOOK IT OVER <<<

Gentleness is displayed through humility, unselfishness, and might restrained (a strong hand with a soft touch). Gentleness is not anger, a desire for revenge, harsh, unrelenting, a sense of entitlement, self-absorbed. It is also not weakness or inferiority. Reflect and discuss.

The Jesus meter: *“The mouth speaks what the heart is full of”* (Luke 6:45). Can you be gentle with a loose mouth? Why or why not?

Gentleness decides that we want to be mild and sensitive in our dealings with others; willing to live without a rigid structure of black and white rules. We decide we *truly* care about people more than policies, relationships, and rules. That’s ouchy. Discuss.

If the pattern of your life is to walk away every time a person upsets you, you cannot learn meekness. We learn gentleness through humility and submission, and these cannot happen in isolation. God does not magically give us this fruit. He develops it through our choice of relationships. What does that say to you now?

NEXT STEPS

1. Honestly evaluate the state of your heart and character in the area of gentleness. If necessary, ask an honest and wise friend.
2. Determine what is your next part in working with the Holy Spirit to develop this fruit.
3. Engage a prayer partner to pray with you for the vital development of this fruit.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: Gentleness is strength under control.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8

Tuesday: 2 Timothy 2:24-25

Wednesday: Proverbs 15:1

Thursday: Philippians 2:3; Ephesians 5:21

Friday: James 3:17

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.

(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)