

Day 6

# Gentleness

**Silence (2 minutes)** Take some time to be quiet, to calm down, and to listen. What has God been teaching you? What are the next steps He wants you to take? How is your spirit doing?

**Scripture** *“Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.”* Titus 3:2

**Discussion** Paul writes to Titus, giving instructions for leading and teaching the Church on the island of Crete. In Chapter 3 Paul describes what all the believers should do, how they behaved before knowing Jesus, and how their Savior saved them because of His mercy. One instruction among many is to always be gentle toward everyone. Our culture often values being the expert, insulting, arguing, interrupting, humiliating others in public, getting in the last word, and admiring those who behave this way. These behaviors are often celebrated in movies and TV series. Being gentle avoids some of the destructiveness we can inflict on each other. It is based on a respect for the fact that God created all of us in his image and that *“... God so loved the world...”* (Jn. 3:16). We are to be gentle with brothers and sisters in Christ...and everyone else. We are to be gentle with those we respect and enjoy being with. We are also to be gentle with those we disagree with politically, who live or think differently about gender issues, abortion, racism, and people who don't like Christians. The Lord may call us to speak, but first we should assess our attitude and thinking. If these are suspect, silence is probably better. Sometimes gentleness can be expressed by asking questions and listening. It is striking how inclusive Paul's statement about gentleness is. Being gentle means we express ourselves with an attitude that acknowledges others are made in the image of God and that Jesus loves them. It means expressing ourselves with an awareness of our own sins, errors, and limitations. It means being gracious about the mistakes of others and not verbally attacking them when we have the opportunity. It means having the attitude described in the well-known quote, “Christianity is one beggar telling another beggar where he found bread.” (D. T. Niles)

**Application** As we consider gentleness as a fruit of the Spirit, consider who you find it easiest to be gentle towards. Maybe it's those in your family, or other relationships you treasure highly. Now consider who you find it the hardest to be gentle with. Perhaps its those you disagree with politically or theologically, or those who have wronged you. Ask God to give you a spirit of gentleness this week to treat everyone you meet with gentleness.

**Prayer** Father, You have charged me to always be gentle toward everyone. I praise You Father for Your wisdom. I never would have understood this without You. *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts”* (Is. 55:8-9). You know there is no way I can do this if I look at myself with pride or focus on what I think is wrong, weak, foolish, or sinful about others.

The only way I can always be gentle to everyone is to recognize that we were all made in Your image and are dearly loved by You. And though *“all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Rom. 3:23), you are the One *“who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth”* (1 Tim. 2:4). Holy Spirit, You showed me I was separated from the Father. You showed me I was a beggar. You gave me the craving to seek the Living Bread and You let me find Him. May my thoughts, attitude, speech, and behavior reflect the truth that we are all beggars and You alone offer Living Bread. Then I will be able to be gentle toward everyone. Amen.



**Silence (2 minutes)** Talk to God about what you are learning. What are your fears? Where are your hangups? Pray for direction.

**Scripture memory** for the week: *“Come to 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, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”* Matthew 11:28-30

