

**HOW TO BE A FRUITFUL CHRISTIAN SERIES (Part 7)**

***“The Fruit of the Spirit Is GENTLENESS”***

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness,*

*goodness, faithfulness, GENTLENESS, self-control.*

Galatians 5:22-23

***> #1 - Let’s define GENTLENESS***

**The Greek word for *gentle* is *praus or praos* denotes *"gentle, mild, meek.”* This *praus* or *gentleness* is an inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly towards God.**

**Gentleness is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting; it is closely linked with humility.**

**When we look to the term *meekness* we tend to think weakness and pusillanimity (that is cowardice) to a greater or less extent, describes a condition of mind and heart, and as 'gentleness' is appropriate rather to actions, however this meekness is a gentleness manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer as the fruit of POWER.**

**The common assumption is that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help himself; but the Lord was 'meek' because he had the infinite resources of God at His command. Described negatively, meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all.**

**GENTLENESS has reference to our disposition and behavior, and often suggests a deliberate or voluntary kindness or forbearance in dealing with others: a gentle pat; gentle with children.**

**Meek implies a SUBMISSIVE spirit, and may even indicate undue submission in the face of insult or injustice.**

**Mild suggests absence of harshness or severity. ANTONYMS for *gentleness* would be *harsh, cruel, violent, wild, and unruly.***

***- Trench* the Bible translator gives the following definition in regards to the *gentleness* *of God* – “All God's going back from the strictness of his rights as against men, all his allowing of their imperfect righteousness and giving a value to that which, rigidly estimated, would have none; all his refusal to exact extreme penalties; all his remembering whereof we are made and measuring his dealings with us thereby.”**

**It is the helping grace of God, that practical hearkening on the part of God when called upon for help; giving all this, God demands the same spirit of gentleness from us toward others.**

**We find the word *“gentleness”* in 2 Sam 22:36 (Hebrew -*`anah*), which means *"to bend low," "humility," "to condescend."***

**David speaks of God’s gentleness in 2 Sam 22:1-2; 36 - *Then David spoke to the LORD the words of this song, on the day when the LORD had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. And he said: . . . "You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your gentleness has made me great.***

**- Gentleness produces persuasive speech according to Proverbs 25:15 - *By long forbearance a ruler is persuaded, and a gentle TONGUE breaks a bone*.**

***> #2 - Let’s examine GENTLENESS according to JESUS***

***Let’s look to JESUS for gentleness in Matthew 11:28-30 - Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.***

**Our Lord and Savior calls us to LEARN of His *gentleness*, for this is His own disposition. Jesus teaches us in the *His Beatitudes* in Matthew 5:5 - *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.***

**His lowliness is said of Him as the King Messiah in Matthew 21:4-5 - *All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"* (ref. - Zech 9:9).**

**- Let’s learn of the gentleness of Jesus with us and with children, turn to Matt. 18:1-7 -*At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"***  ***Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!***

**Also, Matthew 19:13-15 - *Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.***

**- Here’s a sample of the incalculable events that reflects the gentleness of Jesus – John 4:1-42.**

# *> #3 - Let’s LIVE GENTLENESS*

**- Let’s learn seven lessons of GENTLENESS:**

**(1) The apostle Paul declared that Christians should have a spirit of gentleness toward ALL people - Philippians 4:5 - *Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.***

**(2) Is gentleness a part of our DAILY demeanor? In 2 Corinthians 10:1-2 - *Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.***

**(3) Do we restore other believers in a SPIRIT of gentleness? Galatians 6:1 - *Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.***

**(4) What are the qualifications of a SERVANT of the Lord? In 2 Timothy 2:24-26 - *And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.***

**(5) Let’s make sure that we put away the past actions and REACTIONS and always present the life of Christ! - Titus 3:1-4 - *Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.***

**(6) Observe the LOVE of gentleness - 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8 - *But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.***

**(7) GENTLENESS is to be our way in MARRIAGE, turn to 1 Peter 2:21-3:10 - *For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.***

***Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.***

***Do not let your adornment be merely outward — arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel — rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.***

***For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.***

***Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.***

***Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.***

**(8) GENTLENESS is our duty in the body of Christ, the church –Romans 12:9-21 -**  ***Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. Therefore***

***"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.***