

A Gentle Spirit

1 Peter 3:3-4 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewellery or fine clothes. 4 Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

Gentleness is beautiful. Gentleness is of great worth to God. There are virtues that God values greatly. Gentleness is one of them. We have a choice. What will we make of great value to ourselves? How much time do we spend working on our outward selves compared to the inner self. It is essentially a spirit. 1 Cor 4:21 also speaks of a gentle spirit. *What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a rod of discipline, or shall I come in love and with a gentle spirit?* Gentleness is part of the born again spirit. *Gal 5:22-23. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

Why is a gentle and quiet spirit worth a lot to God? I believe that when we don't walk in gentleness, we short circuit the anointing. Often God can only use us when we are in this state of a gentle and quiet spirit. Gentleness is enhanced by other attributes. This is why I call it a combo virtue. It is best described as a combination of related attributes. *Eph 4:2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.* Biblical gentleness is not being passive. **Biblical gentleness is the behavioural manifestation of meekness. It is strength that is endowed with mercy, kindness, patience, self-control, peace, respect and consideration.** Often when we are not gentle it is because one of these attributes is missing. Someone who demonstrated this combination of attributes was David. I believe one of the things that made David a man after God's heart was his gentleness.

2 Sam 18:5 The king commanded Joab, Abishai and Ittai, "Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake." And all the troops heard the king giving orders concerning Absalom to each of the commanders.

In this message we will share some insights into what the Bible teaches on gentleness.

1. A gentle spirit is one of the primary attributes of Jesus.

He describes Himself as gentle.

Mt 21:5 "Say to Daughter Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

Mt 11:29-30 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. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Paul describes Jesus as gentle.

2 Cor 10:1 By the humility and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am "timid" when face to face with you, but "bold" toward you when away!

2. We are all called to demonstrate gentleness to all people.

Our call to gentleness has no qualifications. Everyone is called to be gentle to everyone all the time.

*Titus 3:1-2 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.***

Again we see here this wonderful combination of attributes that embody and encapsulate gentleness.

God wants our gentleness to be seen clearly by others.

Phil 4:5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

3. We are called to demonstrate gentleness when opposed.

How do you deal with apologetics? When defending the Gospel are you gentle or proud and harsh?

1 Pet 3:15 But in your hearts revere 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,

Many people are gentle but change when triggered. What makes you lose your gentle spirit?

2 Tim 2:25 Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,

Prov 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Prov 25:15 Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a gentle tongue can break a bone.

Let the gentle spirit become a weapon for you.

4. Christian leaders are expected to exhibit gentleness as a standard.

1 Tim 3:2-3 Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

5. Gentleness is a virtue that can be pursued.

1 Tim 6:11 But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

It is interesting that in this final charge Timothy receives from Paul, gentleness is included amidst the other attributes. You can pursue gentleness by clothing yourself with it daily. Again, we see this wonderful combination of attributes that go with gentleness.

Col 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

6. We are called to restore others gently.

Gal 6:1 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted.

A gentle person does not avoid conflict. Rather, he has learned how to confront matters with gentleness.