

Family Fellowship, Week Beginning 5th October

Over the past while we have been learning about the FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT. When we put our faith in Jesus, we receive an amazing gift from Jesus in the form of the Holy Spirit. As the Holy Spirit leads us, we grow and start to bear fruit! It's a way of saying that we become more like Jesus.

This week we are thinking about **GENTLENESS** – How **God** is gentle towards **us** and how we can be gentle towards other people.

Monday 5th October

READ: Galatians 5:22,23 (ICB)

22 But the Spirit gives love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control.

CHAT: It's a little while ago that we were thinking about the fruit of the Spirit. Can you name some of them? (*take answers*).

This week we are thinking about **GENTLENESS** – what it means for us and how God shows us His gentleness. What comes to your mind when you think of gentleness? (*take answers*). In his sermon this Sunday Robin described gentleness as ***being humble and considerate. Showing an awareness of how other people respond differently to situations.*** A common misunderstanding is that gentleness is weakness or passivity. True gentleness, however, is just the opposite. It requires great strength and self-control.

We think of gentleness as being soft or tender. That can be part of it, but gentleness describes more than that. It used to be that if you were a man from a noble family, or a family with high social or political standing, you'd be called a *gentleman*. The appropriate way for a gentleman to behave would be to act considerately toward others, to treat others kindly, and to be polite. Those things all describe gentleness. Gentleness is strong but also loving.

What would be the opposite of being gentle? (*take answers*). [Someone who lacks gentleness is often prideful and easily angered, or feels the need for revenge]

Can you give a practical example of how you can be gentle this week? (*take answers*).

PRAY: Ask God to help you to be gentle with others around you this week.

Tuesday 6th October

CHAT: An example of gentleness can be seen in John 8, when the Pharisees bring a woman to Jesus who was caught in adultery. The Pharisees told Jesus that the Law of Moses commanded them to stone such a woman, to which Jesus responds, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her" (John 8:7). How did Jesus show gentleness? (*take answers*).

READ: John 8: 10,11 (ICB)

¹⁰ Jesus stood up again and asked her, "Woman, all of those people have gone. Has no one judged you guilty?" ¹¹ She answered, "No one has judged me, sir." *Then Jesus said, "So I also don't judge you. You may go now, but don't sin again."*

CHAT: Just like how Jesus was gentle with the woman in this story, God is gentle with us. Even in our sin, He continues to love us. He does not keep record of our wrongs, but offers forgiveness if we come to Him.

God wants us to be gentle to others. Matthew 6:14-15 says, "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." A gentle heart comes from having *love* for others. This is shown in our thoughts and in the way we interact with those around us.

Can you think back of a situation where it was really hard to show gentleness to a friend, brother or sister? (*take answers*). Try to keep Jesus' example in mind when you're facing situations where it's hard to show gentleness to others and to stay calm and respond kindly.

PRAY: Thank God that he is and has been gentle to each of us.

Wednesday 7th October

READ: Numbers 12:3 (ICB)

3 Now Moses was very humble. He was the least proud person on earth.

CHAT: “Who do you think you are?” is a popular TV series exploring the ancestry of celebrities. Research into the previous generations of your family is not only interesting it is also enlightening – **you can learn a great deal about why you are the way you are** when you understand more about those who have gone before you in your family tree. Robin mentioned this in his sermon to make a link to Moses who knew his identity. Being adopted by the Pharaoh’s daughter could have made him very proud. But **“By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter...” (Hebrews 11:24)**. Why? Because he knew the people he grew up with thought they were gods, while Moses believed in God as his Creator. In Genesis Moses not only writes about our **creation** but also about our **fall**. Why do you think we need to know that God is our maker and that we are sinners to be able to show gentleness to others? (*take answers*). It will help us to see that we also make mistakes. But that God wants to forgive us. And He wants to help us to respond with kind words to others and forgive them.

PRAY: Thank you Jesus for being our maker. Even though we do so many things wrong you keep forgiving us over and over again. Help us to remember this when someone is angry at us. Help us to speak kindly to them. Thank you for loving us. Help us to show love to others. In Jesus name. Amen.

Thursday 8th October

READ: Proverbs 15:1

¹ A gentle answer will calm a person's anger. But an unkind answer will cause more anger.

CHAT: Today we will be talking about the power of gentle words. What are some things that make you really angry? How do you respond to those things? (*Take answers*).

Gentleness is being loving, tender, calm, and humble in the things you say and do instead of being harsh or mean. In proverbs we just read how a gentle answer will calm a person's anger. The wisdom is simple. If someone is angry, use gentle speech to calm them. Do not use defensive or harsh words, for that will increase anger. You can end conflict and fighting by calming words. When we are gentle with someone it doesn't mean we avoid speaking the truth but we speak the truth in love.

You can compare kind words with a pillow. You can't fight a pillow. The pillow will take any blows you give it without hitting back. There is no fight; all punches are absorbed, and the pillow is not hurt; anger quickly gives up, and the fight is over. The Bible tells us that we accomplish more by responding to those who are cruel or angry with gentleness. When people lash out and say hurtful things, it is often because they have pain in their hearts. God wants us to be people who say kind things that will help *heal* the hurt in others. Kind words are like God's 'bandages' for people who have 'bleeding' hearts.

PRAY: Pray together and ask God to help all of you show His love to hurting people by speaking words of encouragement.

Friday 9th October

READ: Colossians 3:12-14 (ICB)

¹² God has chosen you and made you his holy people. He loves you. So always do these things: Show mercy to others; be kind, humble, gentle, and patient. ¹³ Do not be angry with each other, but forgive each other. If someone does wrong to you, then forgive him. Forgive each other because the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ Do all these things; but most important, love each other. Love is what holds you all together in perfect unity.

CHAT: Would you prefer to eat a spoonful of sugar or a spoonful of salt? (*take answers*). What does it feel like when you get salt on a cut or a scratch? (*take answers*). How does it feel when you have done something wrong and someone corrects you harshly? (*take answers*). When we correct people harshly, it can make them feel worse than they already do, just like it stings when you get salt in a cut. When a person has done something wrong, they usually know it. It makes that person feel bad when another person corrects them aggressively, instead of gently. How does the Bible say we should speak to each other? (*take answers*). The Bible says that we are to correct those who are caught sinning gently and to speak the truth in love. It is not easy to be gentle and loving all the time. Who can help us? (*take answers*).

We can do this by praying before we talk to people about their wrongdoing. When we have God's love in our hearts, we will find it easier to be gentle, kind, patient and humble when we talk to those who have hurt us or done wrong.

PRAY: Pray that the Holy Spirit would help you in difficult moments to not speak words that hurt.

[WEEKEND]

Saturday 10th October

Chat: What did you learn this week? What was hard or confusing? What was fun that you did this week?

Pray: Thank God for the week we just had. Pray for your family and friends.

Sunday 11th October

Chat: Watch the church service streamed online. What was the kids talk about? What did you learn?

Pray: Pray for our church. Pray for your school. Pray for the week ahead.