

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Devotional



GENTLENESS

Monday, 11 – Sunday, 17 August 2025

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Agape-Shaped Gentleness

In today's world, people often seem in a hurry to speak, argue, or prove a point. Kindness can feel rare, and gentleness is sometimes mistaken for being weak or soft. But in the Bible, gentleness is something powerful—it's a key part of the life God calls us to live. In Galatians 5:22–23, the Bible says that gentleness is a flavour of the fruit of the Spirit. That means it's a result of the Holy Spirit working inside us. It's not something we just try harder to be—it's something God grows in us when we follow Him.

The kind of gentleness the Bible talks about is shaped by *agape* love. Agape is the Greek word for love that gives without expecting anything in return. It's the love God has for us—pure, strong, and selfless. Gentleness that comes from this kind of love isn't weak at all. In fact, it takes real strength to stay calm, kind, and respectful when others are rude, hurtful, or unfair.

Jesus showed us what true gentleness looks like. He was strong—He had power and authority—but He was also humble and kind. He invited children to come to Him. He spoke with care to people who were hurting. And when He was insulted and attacked, He didn't strike back. Instead, He responded with love, even in pain.

In the original language of the New Testament, the word for gentleness (*prautēs*) means strength that is under control. It's like a strong wind guided in the right direction or a warhorse under perfect command—powerful but responding to the lightest touch. Gentleness isn't about being quiet or shy—it's about choosing peace, patience, and kindness, even when we could act differently. It shows up in how we speak, how we treat others, and how we respond when we're challenged. In our polarised culture, gentleness is the antidote to:

- Online arguments that escalate unnecessarily
- Family tensions that harden into divisions
- A defensive spirit that strains relationships

This kind of gentleness doesn't come from our personality—it comes from the Spirit. God grows it in us as we spend time with Him and choose to love others the way He loves us. Over the next seven days, we'll explore what this gentleness looks like and how it changes our lives.

Gentleness shaped by agape love isn't weakness—it's strength choosing restraint. Truth wrapped in grace. Conviction without cruelty or animosity. It's a quiet power that reflects the heart of Jesus.

The Challenge Ahead

Are you ready to let God reshape your understanding of power? True gentleness—the kind that changes relationships and reflects Christ—starts now.

**Biblical
gentleness is
STRENGTH CHOOSING
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Truth wrapped
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Conviction without cruelty.**

Get connected
and join the IIC
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Regular announcements,
take part in polls and get
event reminders.

Tap to
connect

Please be aware that mobile numbers are hidden from other community members and
on community admins can send messages.

You will on average receive 2 messages a week.

A poster for the Limitless Festival 2025. It features a black and white photo of three young people (two women and one man) jumping and celebrating. The text on the poster includes 'LIMITLESS FESTIVAL 2025', '9-13 AUGUST', 'STAFFORD SHOWGROUND', and 'LIMITLESSFESTIVAL.CO.UK'. A purple circle on the right side of the poster contains the text 'Give £25'.

Baptism Service Sunday 31st August 11am

If you're interested in being baptised
then please sign up for the baptismal
class (zoom) on Tues 26th August
7.30pm by scanning the QR Code



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Gentleness: a flavour of love-fruit

Galatians 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love... gentleness...” — Galatians 5:22–23 (BSB)



Gentleness doesn't just come from being a “nice person.” It's much deeper than that. According to the Bible, gentleness is part of the *fruit of the Spirit*—the result of letting the Holy Spirit lead your life. And that list in Galatians 5 starts with love, followed by things like peace, kindness, and gentleness. That's important. Gentleness grows out of *love*, the kind of love the Bible calls *agape*.

Agape is not about feelings or romance. It's love that puts others first. It's patient, kind, forgiving, and strong. This love doesn't need anything in return. It chooses what is best for others, even when it's hard. That's the kind of love that shapes real gentleness.

When we have *agape* love, we don't speak harshly or act in anger. Instead, we treat people with care and respect—even when they don't deserve it. That's what Jesus did. He was gentle, not because He was weak, but because He was full of love. He welcomed those who were hurting. He forgave people who failed. He stayed calm and loving, even when others attacked Him.

Sometimes people think gentleness means being quiet or letting others walk all over you. But that's not the Bible's view. Gentleness means choosing peace over pride, kindness over revenge, and love over anger. It's strength guided by love.

You don't have to force yourself to be gentle. Instead, focus on loving people with the love God gives you. As you grow in *agape* love, gentleness will start to grow in your words, in your actions, and in your heart.



(1) What do you usually think of when you hear the word “gentleness”? (2) Why do you think the Bible connects gentleness to love? (3) Who in your life could use a little more gentleness from you?



God, thank You for loving me with perfect love. I want to love others like You do. Help me to grow in gentleness—not from trying harder, but by staying close to You. Teach me to speak kindly, act gently, and love people with patience and care. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge for Today:

Look for one moment today when you could respond in frustration—but instead, choose to respond with gentleness. Let your love shape your words and actions.



Jesus Shows Gentle Strength

Matthew 11:29

“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.” (BSB)



When you think about someone strong, do you picture them as *gentle*?

Most people don't. They imagine someone loud, bold, or physically powerful. But in today's text, Jesus describes Himself in a surprising way: “I am *gentle* and *humble* in heart.”

Jesus is the most powerful person who ever lived. He healed the sick, calmed storms, and even defeated death. But He never used His power to show off or push people around. He used it to serve, to love, and to invite people to come close. His strength was full of kindness. That's what true gentleness looks like. In this verse, Jesus invites us to *learn from Him*. He uses the image of a yoke—a wooden bar that joins two animals so they can work together. It might sound heavy, but Jesus says His yoke is easy and light. Why? Because when we walk with Him, He does the heavy lifting. His gentleness gives us rest instead of stress.

Jesus doesn't demand perfection. He doesn't shout or shame us. He gently teaches, leads, and lifts us up. When we're tired or feeling like we don't make the grade, His gentleness reminds us: *You are safe with Me*.

If Jesus leads with gentleness, we should too. Strength isn't about being louder, tougher, or always right. It's about being like Jesus—gentle, humble, and full of love.



(a) What does it mean to you that Jesus is “gentle and humble in heart”? (b) How does His gentleness give you rest? (c) Who in your life needs to see this kind of gentle strength through you?



Jesus, thank You for showing me that real strength doesn't have to be loud or forceful. Thank You for being gentle with me, even when I mess up. Help me to learn from You, and to treat others with the same gentleness and humility You show to me. Amen.

Challenge for Today:

When someone around you is struggling, frustrated, or annoying—try leading with gentleness. Instead of reacting, respond like Jesus would: with calm, kind strength.

Do You Think Prayer Is Trying To Convince A Hostile, Unwilling And High-handed God To Do Something He Doesn't Want To Do?

THEN YOU SHOULD READ

The Paternoster Code

A Novel On Prayer



"The book illustrates God's mysterious ways, like His ability to draw straight with crooked lines. It calls attention to all to appreciate that God is everywhere and meets us irrespective of time, space, or agency. A compelling read."

Bishop Matthew Kukah

The picture of God as a loving and caring Father, and not a hostile, unwilling and high-handed Judge, is well-painted in the book. A number of other fundamental matters about prayer have been succinctly captured and aptly illustrated.

Pastor Tony Akinyemi

"A succinctly written book on prayer that is one-of-a-kind.

"A great book with many revelations. I'd say it's more than a book on prayer; it's about developing a relationship with God."

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The Strength of Gentleness

Matthew 5:5

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” (BSB)



In today’s culture, being *meek* or *gentle* is often seen as weak. People are told to “stand up for yourself,” “take control,” and “never back down.” But Jesus says something completely different: “Blessed are the meek.” In other words, God values people who are gentle in spirit—and promises they will “inherit the earth.”

The word “meek” in this verse doesn’t mean being shy, passive, or soft. It comes from a Greek word (*praus*) that means “strength under control.” It was used to describe powerful animals—like strong horses—that were trained to obey their rider. The strength didn’t disappear. It was simply directed with care and purpose.

That’s what gentleness really is: strength that’s guided by love and controlled by God. It’s knowing you *could* fight back or show off—but instead, you choose patience, humility, and kindness. Not because you’re afraid—but because you trust God to lead.

Jesus lived this out perfectly. He had all the power in the world, yet He spoke with calm, walked with humility, and treated even His enemies with respect. He stayed silent before His accusers and forgave those who hurt Him. That’s not weakness—that’s the strongest kind of love.

As followers of Jesus, we’re called to live the same way. Gentleness isn’t about being a doormat or avoiding hard things. It’s about being so secure in God’s love and power that you don’t have to prove yourself. You can be bold, but also kind. Honest, but not harsh. Brave, but gentle.



(a) Have you ever thought of gentleness as a form of strength? Why or why not? (b) In what situations do you struggle to stay gentle? (c) How does Jesus’ example challenge the world’s idea of what strength looks like?



Father, thank You for showing me that real strength doesn’t have to be loud or controlling. Help me to be strong in Your love and gentle in my words and actions. Teach me how to stay calm and kind, even when things are hard. I want to follow Jesus’ example of true, powerful gentleness. Amen.

Challenge for Today: Today, when you feel the urge to argue, push back, or prove a point—pause. Ask God to help you respond with gentleness instead of pride or anger. Let your strength show through your love.



Gentle Words Can Change Everything

Proverbs 15:1

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. (ESV)



Have you ever been in a conversation where things suddenly got tense—like one wrong word could spark a full-blown argument? Proverbs 15:1 gives us a simple but powerful truth: *how* we respond can either calm things down or make them worse.

A **soft answer** doesn't mean avoiding the truth or pretending everything is fine. It means choosing calm, kind words even when you're upset. It means not letting your emotions take over the moment. Harsh words, on the other hand, usually come from pride, hurt, or the need to win—and they almost always make things worse.

Think about Jesus. He knew how to speak the truth, but He never used His words to crush people. Even when correcting others, He spoke with love and purpose Luke 10:38-42. His words brought healing, not humiliation. That's the kind of speech this verse is pointing us toward—**gentle words that build bridges, not walls**. Gentleness doesn't mean being quiet all the time. It means thinking before you speak, especially when emotions are high. A gentle response might look like pausing before you reply, lowering your voice instead of raising it, or choosing words that aim to understand, not attack.

In a world full of shouting, sarcasm, and online arguments, gentle words stand out. They're powerful—not because they dominate, but because they *disarm*. They show others that you value peace more than pride.

God calls us to be people who speak life, not stir up conflict. And often, the way we say something matters just as much as *what* we say.



- (a) How do you usually respond when you're angry or feel attacked? (b) Can you think of a time when a gentle answer helped calm a tense moment? (c) Who in your life could benefit from gentler words from you?
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God, help me use my words wisely. When I'm tempted to react with anger or frustration, teach me to pause and respond with gentleness. Let my words bring peace, not more conflict. I want to speak like Jesus—truthful but always loving. Amen.

Challenge for Today: Pay attention to your tone and words today—especially in stressful moments. If a conversation starts getting tense, choose a gentle answer and watch what happens.



Speak the Truth Without Tearing People Down

Brothers, if someone is caught in a trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him with a spirit of gentleness. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

—Galatians 6:1 (BSB)

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ Himself, who is the head. —Ephesians 4:15 (BSB)



It's easy to be harsh when we think we're right. Whether we're correcting someone, defending a friend, or calling out a wrong, the truth can sometimes feel like a weapon. But in God's kingdom, truth is never meant to crush—it's meant to *heal*. That's why the Bible tells us to speak the truth *in love* (Ephesians 4:15) and to correct others *gently* (Galatians 6:1).

This kind of gentleness doesn't mean ignoring sin or pretending nothing's wrong. It means caring more about the *person* than the argument. It means saying what's true, but in a way that invites change instead of shame.

Jesus did this often. He didn't avoid hard truths—but He always led with love. Think of how He spoke to the woman caught in adultery. He didn't excuse her actions, but He protected her dignity, forgave her, and gently called her to leave her sin behind. His truth *restored* and *healed*—it didn't tear down.

Being right never gives us permission to be rude. In fact, the more we grow in Christ, the more our words should reflect His gentleness. Galatians 6:1 also warns us to be careful, because pride can sneak in when we think we're spiritually stronger than someone else. Gentleness keeps us humble. It reminds us that we've all needed grace.

So yes—stand for truth. Speak up when something's wrong. But do it with gentleness, not with pride. Do it to build up, not to tear down, to heal and not to harm. When we correct with kindness, we show the heart of Jesus.



(a) Why is it sometimes tempting to be harsh when you're right? (b) Think of a time when someone corrected you gently. How did that impact you? (c) How can you speak truth more lovingly in your own words or actions?



Lord, help me speak truth like You do—with love, patience, and kindness. Keep me from using truth to win arguments or prove I'm better. Instead, teach me to care about people's hearts. Help me correct others gently, and lead me to reflect Your grace in everything I say. Amen.

Challenge for Today: If you need to correct someone or speak up about something today, pause first. Ask: "*Am I speaking to help or to hurt?*" Then choose your words with gentleness and love.



Gentleness with Yourself

Colossians 3:12

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with hearts of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. (BSB)



You probably know how to be gentle *with others*—at least sometimes. But what about when you mess up? When you say something you regret, fall into old habits, or feel like you're not good enough?

For many of us, the person we're the harshest with is *ourselves*.

We replay our mistakes. We beat ourselves up. We say things in our minds we'd never say to a friend: *"I'm so stupid. I'll never get this right. God must be disappointed in me."* But that's not how God speaks to you. And it's not how He wants you to speak to yourself.

In today's text, Paul reminds Believers who they are: *God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved*. That's your starting point—not shame, but love. Because of that, you're invited to *clothe yourself* in things like compassion, humility, and gentleness—not just toward others, but in how you carry yourself through life.

Gentleness with yourself means allowing space to grow, fail, learn, and heal. It means remembering that God is patient—and you can be patient with yourself too. It's not about ignoring sin or avoiding responsibility. It's about responding to your struggles the same way God does—with truth and grace.

Even Jesus didn't rush spiritual growth in His disciples. He walked with them, corrected them gently, and gave them time to mature. You're no different.

So when you fall short, don't let your inner voice be one of harsh judgment. Let it echo God's heart: *"You're still Mine. Let's try again."*



(1) Are you harder on yourself than you are on others? Why do you think that is? (2) How do you think God sees you when you fail? (3) What would it look like to be gentler with yourself this week?



Father, thank You for loving me even when I fall short. Teach me to see myself the way You see me—chosen, holy, and loved. Help me to stop tearing myself down and instead walk in humility and grace. Make me gentle, even with myself. Amen.

Challenge for Today: Pay attention to your inner voice today. If you catch yourself being overly critical, stop. Replace it with something true from God's Word—like *"I am loved"* or *"His grace is enough for me."*

Let Your Gentleness Be Known

“Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.” — Philippians 4:5 (NIV)

You’ve spent six days learning, thinking, and praying about gentleness—not just as a personality trait, but as a flavour of the fruit of the Spirit, a mark of strength, and a reflection of Jesus Himself. Today is not about adding more information. It’s about *responding*.

We read in Philippians 4:5, “Let your gentleness be evident to *all*.” That means the people around you—family, classmates, teammates, online followers, and even strangers—should see and *feel* your gentleness. Not because you’re trying to impress them, but because the Spirit is shaping your heart, and it’s overflowing into your everyday life.

This is a moment to reflect on what the Spirit has been doing in you—a God-timed opportunity to grow or change. Maybe something clicked during one of the devotions this week. Maybe a verse stuck with you. Maybe the Holy Spirit gently pointed out something that needs to shift in your heart, your relationships, or your words.

1. What stood out to me most this week?

Was it Jesus’ gentle strength? The way my words affect others? Learning to be gentle with myself?

2. Where did I feel challenged or convicted?

Is there a specific relationship or situation where I need to show more gentleness?

3. What do I believe God is saying to me?

Write down any thoughts, scriptures, or impressions you sense from Him.

4. What am I going to do about it?

Take a moment to outline a simple action plan:

- ☐ Is there someone you need to speak to with more kindness?
- ☐ Do you need to pause more before reacting?
- ☐ Will you spend time daily asking the Holy Spirit to grow this fruit in you?



Jesus, thank You for walking with me through this week. You have shown me that gentleness is not weakness—it’s Your way. I pause now to listen to You. Help me remember what You’ve spoken to my heart. Help me obey. Shape my life so that my gentleness reflects Your love to everyone around me. I can’t do this without You. I want to walk gently because *You are near*. Amen.

