



Fruit of the Spirit Bible Studies

2021

Study 6: The Fruit of the Spirit- Gentleness & Faithfulness

Talk About

Share about how gentleness was viewed or expressed in your experience (family, school or workplace or culture).

Scripture

During the time of James leadership in the early Church, there were some expressions of zealous Christian faith that unfortunately lacked the crucial fruit of gentleness. This portion of the letter helps us understand the how important gentleness is in the life of a Christian and how to grow it.

Observation

GENTLENESS- Read James 3:13-18

1. According to James, what is the mark of true wisdom and understanding? What is the role that meekness (Gentleness/Humility) plays in connection with wisdom?
2. James begins to paint a picture of what he calls “earthly wisdom” in v14-16. What are the two main ingredients of this “wisdom” (v14, 16) and how would you define them?
3. What is the nature of this “earthly wisdom” (v15) and what does it result in (v16)?
4. An expanded picture of “heavenly wisdom” is painted in v17,
 - a. List each of the qualities and reflect on what they mean.
 - b. What does this heavenly wisdom lead to and how do we grow it?
 - c. Why do you think gentleness is so crucial in this picture of heavenly wisdom?
5. How does this description of gentleness align with Jesus life and example? Do any particular gospel stories come to mind for you?

Talk About

Think of someone who matches the quality of faithfulness (This could be a fictional or historical figure, or someone you know personally). Why do they stand out to you?



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Observation

FAITHFULNESS- Read Matthew 25:14-30

6. What stands out to you about the start of the parable (v14-15)? How is this similar to what God does with us?
7. What qualities do you notice of the servants who were entrusted with the 5 talents and the 2 talents (v16-17)? How did the master interpret what they had done (v21-22) and what is their reward?

Note: A talent was a weight of measurement of gold or silver of approximately 75 pounds (34 kg). It was a very significant amount of money.

8. What did the “one talent” servant do with his resource and why (v18, 24-25)? How was this behaviour interpreted by the master and what was the end result (v26-30)?
9. What response is Jesus looking for from us as we hear this parable today?

Apply

In which areas or relationships might God be prompting you to grow in gentleness with His help? Take a step in this direction.

What would growing faithfulness look like in your life in responding to the parable of the talents?

Prayer

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you grow in gentleness and faithfulness as you surrender your willingness to Him. If specific situations come to mind, pray for these together, that breakthrough might come.



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Study 7: The Fruit of the Spirit- Self Control

Talk about

Share your thoughts on the following quote:

“The ability to subordinate an impulse to a value is the essence of the proactive person.”
- Stephen R. Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.

Introduction

As the good news was transforming the island of Crete, Paul was teaching how the gospel transforms our behaviour in contrast to the behaviour of false teachers who were roaming about. One quality that stands out significantly is the quality of ‘self-control’.

Scripture: Read Titus 2:11-15

Observation

1. In this passage, Paul describes what the “Grace of God” has done. What does Paul mean when he writes that “the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people”?
2. The grace of God saves us, and at the same time, it trains us. Unpack the different words Paul uses to describe the way God’s grace trains us (v12)?
3. How is the theme of “self-control” repeated in Paul’s encouragement to the various groups in the Cretan Christian community (v2-10)?
4. What role do you think the anticipation of Jesus’ return plays in this “grace-training” process of growing “self-control” in us (v13)?
5. Verse 14 gives more insight into why Jesus sacrificed so much for us. What is the three-fold end result that Jesus has in mind for us when He redeems us?

Apply

How might you lean into this “Grace-Training” process that the Spirit is working in you? What areas of self-control would you love to see God help to grow in your life? Commit these to prayer and take a step of faith.



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Reflecting on the fruit of the Spirit.

As you reflect on this journey of learning more about the fruit of the Spirit, what are some insights or common themes that you've noticed? What are some changes you've experienced in your life? Share your thoughts with others in your group.

Summary

The first two studies focused on the tensions we face when we attempt to live by Spirit.

Firstly, we must overcome the tendency to live by the law ("Legalism is any attempt to gain acceptance or forgiveness from God through our own works or merits").

Secondly, we must overcome the tendency to live by the flesh (That part of our nature which leans towards satisfying our sinful desires).

It is by continuing to live by the Spirit, walk by the Spirit and keep in step with the Spirit, that we are able to overcome legalism and license (The law and our flesh).

In studies 3-7, we looked at each of the expressions of the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22. These are a result of the Holy Spirit working in us as we cooperate with Him. The fruit is not a result of the Spirit's work without our involvement, and they are not a result of our efforts without God's help.

As we continue this journey of spiritual transformation, it is important for us to avoid two extremes:

1. Assuming that this transformation is solely God's activity and we have no part to play;
2. Living as if it all depends on our efforts without depending on the Spirit's help and power.

God welcomes us into a beautiful partnership of transformation that renews us, renews our relationships and by God's grace, begins to renew the world in which we live. May this partnership become a growing dynamic reality for you and for me as we wait for His glorious return! Amen.

Prayer:

Invite the Holy Spirit to fill the gathering of your life group/discipleship group. Pray with one another for the fruit of the Spirit to grow in your lives. Pray the fruit will grow in your homes, workplaces and in the church by the power of His Spirit.