

RIVERS CROSSING COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Discussion Guide – Trail Markers Week #8

Gentleness / May 30, 2021 / Pastor Matt Jewell



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Spring Quarter Wrap-Up Questions | It's the last official week for Community Groups to gather before the summer break. Use the questions below to reflect, celebrate how God has moved, and plan ahead.
 - a) Reflect on your last several months in group. What has God taught you and where have you grown in your faith? Do you have a big takeaway from studying the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23 – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control)? How has the group supported you during this season of life?
 - b) The Summer Quarter (June through August) is one of encouraged rest. Even if you don't meet with regularity, how can you stay connected with one another?
 - c) The Fall Quarter begins in September. Does your group plan to continue meeting in the fall? If yes, are there any changes you'd like to implement? For example – shared group leadership, logistical changes (day, time, childcare plans), welcoming new group members, increased focus on prayer, etc.
2. Pastor Matt defined the fruit of gentleness as being tender, humble, merciful, and knowing what posture and response is fitting for any occasion. Having a disposition of tenderness and a willingness to show tough love when required. Strength under control as an offering of love.
 - a) How does this definition of gentleness fit with your previous understanding of gentleness?
 - b) Gentleness can also be described as responding in balance – neither overreacting or underreacting. Do you more often find yourself overreacting or underreacting to situations in your life? Explain.

DIVING DEEPER

3. Jesus is our model for gentleness. Is there a specific story in Jesus' life and ministry that stands out to you as an example of gentleness? Share this story with the group and why it resonates with you.

Matthew 11:28-29 (ESV) – ²⁸Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

4. Read Isaiah 40:10-11 together. Then reflect on this passage using the questions below.

Isaiah 40:10-11 (NIV) – ¹⁰See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. ¹¹He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

a) Have you personally experienced God's gentleness? If so, explain your answer. How has that affected the way you view and treat others?

b) If you're not a Christian, how does this image of God compare with your thinking about him?

5. One of the most practical ways we can display the fruit of gentleness is with our speech. Read the following Bible verses and discuss the corresponding questions.

James 3:9-10 (NIV) – ⁹With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

Ephesians 4:29 (NIV) – Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Proverbs 15:1 (NIV) – A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Proverbs 15:4 (NLT) – Gentle words are a tree of life; a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.

Psalms 141:3 (NLT) – Take control of what I say, O Lord, and guard my lips.

Would you say that your communication – whether verbal or written – is characterized by gentleness? Explain your answer. Where could you grow in cutting out “unwholesome talk” and speaking gently?

TAKING IT HOME

6. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:6-12 and 2 Corinthians 10:1-2. Then discuss the corresponding questions.

1 Thessalonians 2:6-12 (NIV) – ⁶We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority. ⁷Instead, we were like young children [*i.e., were gentle*] among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, ⁸so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. ⁹Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. ¹⁰You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. ¹¹For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹²encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

2 Corinthians 10:1-2 (NLT) – ¹I, Paul, appeal to you with the gentleness and kindness of Christ—though I realize you think I am timid in person and bold only when I write from far away. ²Well, I am begging you now so that when I come I won't have to be bold with those who think we act from human motives.

- a) Authority is “the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience.” Based on the passages above, how did the Apostle Paul choose to exercise his authority?

- b) Where in your life has God given you authority (examples – marriage, family, place of employment, volunteer roles, etc.)? Would you consider yourself gentle in employing this authority? Explain.

- c) Is there a particular area or person with whom you struggle to display gentleness? Which of the following application points (see below) do you desire to grow in with this area or person?

Gentleness works to defuse conduct (2 Timothy 2:24-25), strives to understand and not demand (Philippians 2:3-5, Romans 14:1), and longs for restoration in relationships (Galatians 6:1).

PRAYER REQUESTS

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RIVERS CROSSING – THINGS TO KNOW

1. **2021 Men's Conference** | There is a desire in all men to be better and do more, but an extraordinary life isn't found sitting on the sidelines. Men, hang out with us on Saturday June 12th at Men's Conference for a day of spiritual renewal, motivating messages from Mark Driscoll and yes, some manly fun. Lunch and dinner are provided with your ticket purchase. To learn more and purchase a ticket, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2021-mens-conference-tickets-143828790785?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>.
2. **Tribes Summer Kickoff** | 7th-12th grade students, join us at the Mason Campus June 9th at 6pm for inflatables, DJ and dancing, food, Kona Ice and a service you don't want to miss! Tribes Summer Kickoff is for incoming 7th grade students through graduating seniors.