

WELCOME

The quality of gentleness appears to be rare in our culture even amongst Christians. Yet this virtue is key to our lives, for nothing can kill a family, friendship, neighbourhood, or even a church like, pride, arrogance, anger, closed ears, and raised voices. God is all about community, and he calls his followers to likewise be about community... and demonstrate gentleness. In the New Testament, the word for gentleness actually comes from a medical term and is associated with a mild medication. Essentially, we could say a gentle person without gentleness causes our stomach to double up in knots. God wants us to be healing agents in the lives of those around us.

Key Idea: I am thoughtful, considerate, and calm in my _____ with others.

Key Verse: "Let your _____ be evident to all. The Lord is near." Philippians 4:5

Key Question: How do I _____ thoughtfulness and consideration?

(Key Application #1): Be _____

(Key Application #2): Be _____

(Key Application #3): Be _____

GETTING STARTED

Begin your discussion by reciting the key verse and key idea together as a group. On your first attempt, use your notes if you need help. On your second attempt, try to state them completely from memory.

KEY VERSE:

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

KEY IDEA: I am thoughtful, considerate, and calm in my dealings with others.

GROUP DISCUSSION

As a group, discuss your thoughts and feelings about the following declarations. Which statements are easy to declare with certainty? Which are more challenging? Why?

- I consider my own shortcomings when faced with the failures of others
- I am known as a person who is sensitive to the needs of others
- I am known for not raising my voice.
- I allow people to make mistakes.

1. Why do you think gentleness is so challenging for believers to grasp?

2. Consider someone in your life who has the ability to be calm and collected in stress filled moments. How did he or she develop this virtue?

3. Are there certain circumstances in your life that make gentle conduct nearly impossible? How could your relationship with God empower you to alter your reaction to this situation?

4. In what ways can Jesus' life be an example of Gentleness for when you face difficulties?

Read Matthew 7:1-5; 1 Timothy 3:1-4 and James 3:17-18

1. How does judgement choke your ability to be calm, considerate and thoughtful?

2. Why do you think the Bible specifically instructs authority figures to be gentle with the people under their care?

3. If judgement leads to anger and quarrelling, what does gentleness produce?

CASE STUDY:

Use the following case study as a model for a real-life situation where you might put this week's key idea into practice.

Sean has invested incalculable amounts of time and money into the development of his youngest son Cade. The results have been infuriating, Cade has flunked out of college twice. Sean used family and business contacts to help Cade find good jobs, but Cade's work ethic is rotten. Consequently, he lost every job Sean set up for him. As a believer, Sean wants to do what is right, but he can hardly hold back the rage he feels towards his son.

Use the following key applications from this session, discuss what you could say or do to help Sean?

Key Application #1: Be thoughtful.

Key Application #2: Be considerate.

Key Application #3: Be calm

CLOSING PRAYER:

Close your time together with prayer. Share your prayer requests with one another. Ask God to help you put this week's key idea into practice.