

Holy Spirit: Spirit Fruit of Gentleness

Grounding Scripture: Matthew 11:28-30

When considering every aspect of the fruit of the Spirit, we can find Jesus giving us a perfect example of what it looks like. The Greek word for gentleness used in the New Testament is often translated as meekness or humility. It is NOT weakness. Rather the true meaning of the spirit fruit is often seen as “strength under control.”

In Matthew 11:28-29, Jesus described himself as gentle. Though at any time Jesus could have demonstrated extraordinary power, he was gentle. In these verses, Jesus describes himself as gentle right after he invites us to ***“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.”*** (Mt. 11:29) Jesus desires that we learn from him by being perfectly yoked to him, in step with him. Then in all of this, we find rest.

- Name a few instances in the life of Jesus which come to mind when you think of his gentleness, his strength under control. (Mt. 11:2-6, Luke 7:44-50, John 14:18-19, Mark 10:13-16)

Demonstrating gentleness in our lives does not mean that we are unwilling to call out a wrong. Those who regularly show the spirit fruit of gentleness pardon and forgive those who have injured them. They also know when to speak words of correction and when to remain quiet. They also understand there is strength in being tenderhearted, even when addressing behavior that needs to change.

- Recall an instance when gentleness was just as powerful in confronting a wrong than being harsh or heavy-handed would have been. Consider what the Apostle Paul said to the Corinthians in this regard. (1 Cor. 4:21)

...be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (Ephesians 4:32-5:2)