

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION

WEEK: NOVEMBER 8-14, 2025

SERIES INFO

Rotten: In a world of fake smiles, quick tempers, and shallow love, we're all producing something. Every word, every choice, every action plants something in someone's heart—either life-giving or toxic. But the Spirit grows something different: love when hate comes easy, joy when life feels heavy, peace in the chaos, patience when you're pushed, kindness in a cruel world, goodness when nobody's watching, faithfulness when others walk away, gentleness in a culture that shouts, and self-control when everything says give in. That's not surface-level. That's transformation. And it might be the very thing that marks the difference between being ruled by the mess around you and being fueled by something greater.

PERSONAL FUN FACTS

Share a personal fun fact about yourself that shows you've either experienced or practiced gentleness. It could be a moment when you surprised someone with a calm response, a gentle habit you have, or even an unusual way you've learned to handle a strong personality — anything that shows *strength under control* in your life!"

TAKEAWAYS

What were the greatest “takeaways” you had from the message this week about the Holy Spirit producing the fruit of gentleness within you?

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Gentleness: Strength Under Control

Scripture: Philippians 4:4-7

Have you ever had to bring calm to something or someone? Maybe you are a parent or grandparent (or maybe a babysitter) who has had to bring an unruly child who is throwing a tantrum under control. How did you do it? You could have yelled and gotten upset, or perhaps you gave patient guidance with your calm words. Or maybe you have tried to train a puppy who was overly aggressive and rather than the use of physical restraint on the animal and harsh words, you instead were patient and guided the dog using gentle reinforcement to shape behavior. It was said that Tony Dungy, former head coach of the Indianapolis Colts showed great strength among those gridiron titans, not by screaming at his players, but by using an “outside of the box” approach based on teaching, respect, and calm communication rather than aggressive, loud, or curse-filled motivation. Gentleness is the expression of humility and restraint that flow from trust in God’s sovereignty. It is choosing to respond with calmness rather than intimidation.

- How does gentleness reflect strength rather than weakness?
- What are some examples (like the ones above) of situations where gentleness could be more powerful than aggression?

Gentleness: Living According to the Rhythms of Grace

Scripture: Matthew 11:28-30 (The Message)

The above Scripture from the Message reads like this: “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life ... learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.” Learning to live “freely and lightly” according to God’s rhythms of grace is how gentleness is lived out, expressed, and embodied in the life of the believer. Living according to the rhythms of grace helps us to relate to God, ourselves, and others in a grace-filled, life-giving, and gentle way.

- Think of a time when you tried to control a situation and it didn’t go well. How might a gentle, grace-filled response have changed things?

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DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Share an example of a time when someone responded to you gently. How did that reflect God's grace?
- Do you find it easier to extend gentleness to others than to yourself? (This gets to the idea of negative self-talk- how would practicing gentleness in self-talk help you to live more consistently in God's grace?)

Gentleness: Reflecting the Pace of Jesus **Scripture: John 18: 25-27, 21:15-17**

As we learned this week from the message, Jesus' pace was deliberate, intentional, and slow enough for love and grace to be shown. His pace of life was never frantic because His strength was always under control. He resisted the pressure to hurry for his way of life isn't measured by efficiency or the speed of productivity, but by transformation and relationship. Gentleness, the kind that Jesus possessed, creates space for hearts to soften, grow, and respond to God and to others. For us, it is about aligning our hearts, actions, and timing with His Spirit.

- Think of someone in your life right now who needs patience, understanding, and restoration. How might gentleness lead to transformation?
- What does Jesus' patient and gentle approach (as he was with Peter in the above passages) teach us about how God restores us, and how we might restore others who have failed or hurt us?

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APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT

- Take a moment to close your eyes and think of a moment in your day/week where you feel rushed or pressured. Ask God to guide your response to this moment with gentleness and intentionality, aligning your response with His pace of grace that is needed in this situation.
- In what settings or within what relationships is God calling you to deeper expression of gentleness?
- **Action Steps This Week**
 - Slow down before you speak
 - Look for who's on the "side of the road"
 - Walk with Jesus; don't race ahead of Him

PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for the quiet strength of Your Spirit and the example of Jesus, who walked this earth with gentleness and grace. Teach us to live at His pace—not rushing ahead in our own strength, nor lagging behind in fear. Help us to be people whose power is guided by love, whose words bring peace, and whose presence reflects Your calm strength. When the world feels hurried and harsh, slow our hearts to listen, soften our responses, and remind us that gentleness is not weakness but Christlike wisdom under Your control. May our lives move to the rhythms of Your grace—steady, merciful, and full of compassion.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.