



# The Faith Messenger

## Connect

[www.yourfaithcommunity.com](http://www.yourfaithcommunity.com)

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## Sundays with Our Savior

Worship Service: 11am  
Sunday School: 10am

## Issue Focus:

### The Fruit of the Spirit: Gentleness & Kindness

Volume 2, Issue #5  
September/October 2024



## Kindness, Compassion and Gentleness Are the Attributes of Love

Welcome to the Faith Messenger newsletter. Our 2024 journey has been focused on the Fruit of the Spirit. In this issue, we'll take a deep dive into two vital Fruit of the Spirit: **Gentleness and Kindness**.

As we navigate together through these pages, we invite you to not only read but to actively engage with the material, allowing God's Word and the wisdom of fellow believers to shape your understanding and practice of these essential Christian virtues.

We'll explore the depths of what Scripture teaches about gentleness and kindness, examining their definitions, importance, and how they intertwine with other aspects of our faith walk.

But our exploration doesn't stop at knowledge. This newsletter is designed to be a tool for genuine discipleship and spiritual growth.

We pray that this newsletter will be a source of encouragement, challenge, and transformation in your walk with Christ.

Cultivating gentleness and kindness is a lifelong journey. It's not about perfection, but about progress - taking small, faithful steps towards becoming more like Christ in our daily interactions.





## The Fruit of Gentleness and Kindness

### Biblical Examples of Gentleness

**Moses:** The meekest man: *"Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth."* (Numbers 12:3). Moses, despite his position of leadership, exemplified gentleness in his interactions with the Israelites and in his relationship with God.

His meekness was not weakness, but rather a strength of character that allowed him to lead with patience and humility.

**David:** Gentleness Towards Enemies: In 1 Samuel 24:1-7, we see David's gentleness towards King Saul, who was seeking to kill him. Despite having the opportunity to harm Saul, David chose to show mercy and respect.

**Paul:** Gentle Apostle: *"What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a rod of discipline, or shall I come in love and with a gentle spirit?"* (1 Corinthians 4:21)

Paul, known for his bold preaching, also demonstrated gentleness in his pastoral care for the early churches.



### What You Need to Know About Kindness

#### Definition:

- Kindness in the Bible refers to a benevolent, compassionate, and helpful disposition towards others.
- It's an active trait, involving not just feeling but doing.

#### Key Aspects:

- Benevolence: A genuine desire for the well-being of others
- Action-oriented: Not just an attitude, but manifested in deeds
- Reflection of God's Character: Demonstrating God's love to others

#### Scripture References:

- Ephesians 4:32 - *"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."*
- Colossians 3:12 - *"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."*

#### Kindness:

- Greek: χρηστότης (chrestotes)
- Strong's Concordance: G5544
- Pronunciation: khray-stot'-ace

### Cultural Misunderstanding of Gentleness

Often mistaken for weakness or passivity in modern society, but biblically it's a sign of spiritual strength and maturity.



### Cultural Misunderstanding of Kindness

Sometimes confused with mere politeness or niceness, but biblical kindness is deeper, involving sacrifice and unconditional love.





### The Interrelationship of Gentleness and Kindness with the Other Fruit of the Spirit

#### The Connectivity

Gentleness and kindness are intricately connected with the other aspects of the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). They work in harmony with:

- **Love:** Gentleness and kindness are practical expressions of love.
- **Joy:** They create an atmosphere where joy can flourish.
- **Peace:** Both contribute to peaceful relationships and communities.
- **Patience:** Gentleness and kindness require and foster patience.
- **Faithfulness:** They demonstrate faithfulness to God's character.
- **Self-control:** Both require mastery over one's impulses and emotions.

#### Potential Misunderstandings and How to Avoid Them

Gentleness, in particular, can sometimes be misunderstood:

- **Misconception:** Gentleness is weakness.
- **Reality:** It's strength under control (Matthew 11:29).
- **Misconception:** Gentle people can't be assertive.
- **Reality:** Jesus was both gentle and assertive (cleansing the temple, Matthew 21:12-13).

#### To avoid misunderstandings:

- Clearly define biblical gentleness in teachings.
- Provide examples of gentle yet strong biblical figures.
- Demonstrate how gentleness coexists with other virtues like courage and conviction.



#### Role in Conflict Resolution Among Believers

Gentleness and kindness are crucial in resolving conflicts:

- They create a safe environment for open dialogue.
- They help de-escalate tensions and emotions.
- They demonstrate Christ-like character in challenging situations.
- They facilitate forgiveness and reconciliation.

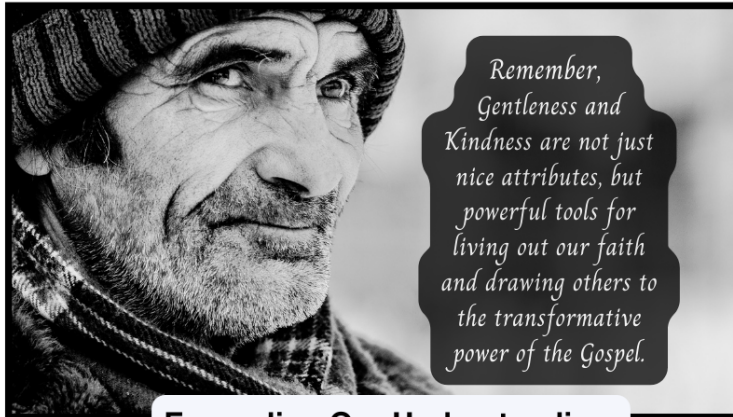
#### Scripture guidance

*"Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently." (Galatians 6:1)*

#### Practicing gentleness and kindness can:

- Reduce stress and anxiety by fostering positive interactions.
- Increase self-esteem through positive feedback from others.
- Improve overall mood by releasing positive neurochemicals.
- Strengthen relationships, leading to better social support.

Both Gentleness and Kindness are integral parts of the singular Fruit of the Spirit, working in harmony with other qualities like love, patience, and self-control to reflect Christ-like character in believers.



### Expanding Our Understanding:

## Modern Perspectives on Gentleness and Kindness

### Historical Insights

Throughout church history, gentleness and kindness have been highly valued virtues. Early church fathers like Clement of Rome emphasized these qualities as essential for Christian leadership.

During the Middle Ages, figures such as Francis of Assisi exemplified radical kindness, even towards animals and nature.

The Reformers, including Martin Luther, stressed that gentleness and kindness were fruits of true faith, not works to earn salvation.

In more recent times, leaders like Mother Teresa have become global symbols of Christian kindness.

This historical perspective reminds us that these virtues have consistently been recognized as core to Christian character, transcending time and theological differences.

### Scientific Support

Modern psychological and sociological research increasingly supports the biblical wisdom on gentleness and kindness. Studies have shown that practicing kindness boosts oxytocin levels, reducing blood pressure and improving overall heart health.

In the workplace, leaders who exhibit gentleness and kindness foster greater team cohesion and productivity.

Neuroscience has revealed that witnessing acts of kindness can stimulate mirror neurons, promoting a ripple effect of positive behavior.

This scientific backing not only affirms biblical teachings but also provides additional motivation for cultivating these virtues, showing that they benefit both individual and community well-being.



### Digital Age Challenges

The advent of digital communication presents unique challenges and opportunities for practicing gentleness and kindness.

Social media platforms can amplify harsh rhetoric and polarization, making gentle and kind interactions seem counter-cultural.

Anonymity online often reduces inhibitions, leading to unkind behavior.

However, Christians can view these challenges as opportunities to stand out by consistently demonstrating digital gentleness and kindness. This might involve thoughtful responses to provocative posts, refraining from sharing inflammatory content, or actively spreading encouragement online.

If we are gentle and kind in sharing our faith, rather than argumentative or hostile, we can build bridges of understanding, demonstrating the attractiveness of the Christian faith through both word and demeanor.

The digital age also offers unprecedented opportunities for acts of kindness.

Navigating this landscape requires wisdom, self-control, and a commitment to reflecting Christ's character in every interaction, whether face-to-face or screen-to-screen.





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## Diverse Cultural Expressions of Gentleness & Kindness

### Asian Cultures

In many Asian cultures, gentleness is often expressed through:

- Indirect communication to avoid confrontation
- Respect for elders and authority figures
- Emphasis on group harmony over individual assertion

**Biblical Connection:** This aligns with Proverbs 15:1 and Ephesians 4:2-3.

### African Cultures

Kindness in many African traditions is demonstrated through:

- Strong emphasis on hospitality and welcoming strangers
- Community support systems, especially in times of need
- Respect for elders as sources of wisdom

**Biblical Connection:** This reflects Hebrews 13:2 and 1 Peter 4:9.

### Latin American Cultures

Gentleness and kindness are often shown through:

- Warm, expressive greetings and physical affection
- Strong family ties and intergenerational support
- Emphasis on relationships over tasks or schedules

**Biblical Connection:** This embodies Romans 12:10 and 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

### Middle Eastern Cultures

These virtues are frequently expressed by:

- Generous hospitality, often going to great lengths for guests
- Use of honorific titles and formal language to show respect
- Patience in building relationships before conducting business

**Biblical Connection:** This reflects 1 Peter 3:8-9 and Colossians 3:12.



## What You Need to Know About Gentleness

### Definition:

- Gentleness in the Bible refers to a humble and mild disposition, particularly in dealing with others. It's not weakness, but rather strength under control. It encompasses the idea of being teachable and submissive to God's will. Gentleness: (Greek: πραῦτης, *prautes*). Strength under control; a humble and mild disposition

### Key Aspects:

- Power with Restraint: Like a powerful horse under the control of its rider
- Humility: An accurate, lowly view of oneself before God
- Consideration: Treating others with care and respect

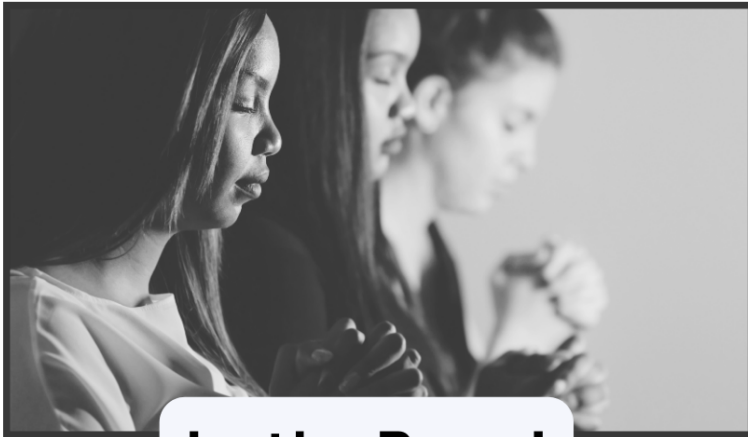
### Scripture References:

- Matthew 11:29 - "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."
- Galatians 5:23 - "gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."





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## Let's Pray!

"Heavenly Father, source of all virtues, we come before You seeking the fullness of Your Spirit. Cultivate in us the fruits of gentleness and kindness, intertwining them with love, joy, peace, patience, faithfulness, and self-control.

As Christ demonstrated perfect gentleness and kindness, empower us to follow His example in our daily lives.

Lord, help us embody strength under control, responding to conflict with gentleness and treating others with undeserved kindness.

In our families, workplaces, churches, and communities, may our actions reflect Your transforming work.

Guide us in using these virtues to build bridges, heal relationships, and draw others to You.

We ask for wisdom to navigate the challenges of our digital age with gentle and kind interactions. In a world often marked by harshness and indifference, grant us the courage to stand firm in gentleness and kindness, especially when misunderstood or opposed.

Following the footsteps of faithful believers throughout history, from the early church to modern-day examples, may we continue the legacy of Christian gentleness and kindness. Let these virtues not only be our witness but also a source of emotional and mental well-being for ourselves and those around us.

In the name of Jesus, our ultimate example of gentleness and kindness, we pray. Amen."

*We are saved  
by grace to  
serve with  
love.*

## Scriptures to Study

- **OLD TESTAMENT - GENTLENESS:** Exodus 32:19, Numbers 12:3, Deuteronomy 8:2, Psalm 18:35, Psalm 25:9, Psalm 37:11, Psalm 45:4, Psalm 149:4, Proverbs 15:1, Proverbs 16:19, Isaiah 11:4, Isaiah 29:19, Zephaniah 2:3
- **NEW TESTAMENT - GENTLENESS:** Matthew 5:5, Matthew 11:29, Matthew 21:5, 1 Corinthians 4:21, 2 Corinthians 10:1, Galatians 5:23, Galatians 6:1, Ephesians 4:2, Colossians 3:12, 1 Timothy 6:11, Titus 3:2, James 3:13
- **OLD TESTAMENT - KINDNESS:** Genesis 21:23, Ruth 2:20, 2 Samuel 9:1, Nehemiah 9:17, Psalm 17:7, Psalm 31:21, Psalm 36:7, Psalm 63:3, Psalm 117:2, Proverbs 11:17, Proverbs 31:26, Isaiah 54:8, Jeremiah 9:24, Hosea 12:6, Joel 2:13
- **NEW TESTAMENT - KINDNESS:** Luke 6:35, Romans 2:4, Romans 11:22, 1 Corinthians 13:4, 2 Corinthians 6:6, Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 2:7, Colossians 3:12, Titus 3:4, 2 Peter 1:7



## Reflection Questions

Ponder these questions deeply and prayerfully. Consider discussing your responses with a trusted friend or small group.

- Recall a time when someone showed you unexpected gentleness or kindness. How did it impact you, and what can you learn from that experience?
- In what area of your life do you find it most challenging to exhibit gentleness? What specific steps can you take to grow in this area?
- How has your understanding of biblical kindness changed or deepened after reading this newsletter? How might this new understanding affect your daily interactions?
- Consider a relationship in your life that could benefit from more gentleness or kindness. What is one concrete action you can take this week to nurture that relationship?
- Reflect on Proverbs 15:1: *"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."* How have you seen this principle at work in your own life? How can you apply it more consistently?
- In what ways can you demonstrate gentleness and kindness in your church community, especially towards those who may be overlooked or marginalized?

## Did You Know it's FRUIT (not Fruits)?

The Greek word used for "fruit" (as in Fruit of the Spirit), in Galatians 5:22-23 passage is "καρπός" (karpos).

Key points about this word:

- **Form:** In Galatians 5:22, καρπός (karpos) is in the nominative singular form.
- **Meaning:** It is used in the New Testament to represent the result or outcome of something.
- **Usage:** The singular form is used consistently in this passage, supporting the understanding of the Fruit of the Spirit as a singular concept.
- **Grammatical agreement:** The singular verb "is" (ἐστίν, estin) is used, agreeing with the singular noun "fruit."
- **Biblical consistency:** This usage aligns with other symbolic uses of "fruit" in the New Testament, where a singular "fruit" often represents a collective outcome or product.
- This grammatical evidence from the original Greek text strongly supports the theological understanding that the Fruit of the Spirit is indeed a singular concept, encompassing all the qualities listed, rather than separate "fruits."
- The use of the singular form underscores the unity and interconnectedness of these spiritual qualities as a single manifestation of the Holy Spirit's work in a believer's life.





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## CHECK OUT OUR NEW DIGITAL PRESENCE



Exciting news! Faith Community Wesleyan Church-Chattanooga has launched a brand new website and Facebook page to better serve our congregation and connect with our community.

**Use your smartphone camera to scan this QR Code for fast access to our website. Just hover over this and click onto the link that will pop up.**



Visit:

[www.yourfaithcommunity.com](http://www.yourfaithcommunity.com)  
to discover a wealth of resources tailored to enrich your spiritual life.

Our website features twice-monthly blog posts that offer practical guidance for living out our tagline: "Christ Our Faith. Christ Our Hope. Christ Our Life."

Join us as we build a vibrant faith community, both online and in person.

**Together in Faith**, we're here to serve with love and grow in grace. Welcome to our digital home!

We also expanded our online community through Facebook at:

<https://facebook.com/yourfaithcommunity/>

**To get the most out of our online presence:**



- Like, comment on, and share our posts to help grow our online community. It's all about the algorithms! Your response, follows, comments, and sharing our posts help our church rank higher with Google and enhances our credibility in Google searches.
- Click the cobalt blue logo on our Facebook page (on the cover profile photo) to easily access our Facebook Home page.
- Sign up for our newsletter to receive updates and special event information.
- Request to join our Private Group within our Facebook page to confidentially share prayer requests and have a safe place to discuss faith-related issues.



Rev. Ashley

Rev. Phillip

### We Praise God for Sundays

Worship Service: 11am Eastern  
Sunday School: 10am Eastern  
[www.yourfaithcommunity.com](http://www.yourfaithcommunity.com)



### Our Team

Lead Pastor: Rev. Ashley Mew  
Associate Pastor: Rev. Phillip Bartlett  
Worship Leader: Beth Pickering  
Vice Chair: Eddie Galyon, Jr.  
Ushers: Greg Holland & Donald Glen