

the fruit of the spirit

(part 4 – gentleness and self-control)

recap

Read Galatians 5:16-26

1. Why do you think the Christian characteristics we have been looking at over the past few weeks are called the ‘fruit of the Spirit’?

They are called ‘fruit’ as having the Holy Spirit within us enables us to demonstrate these qualities. Note also that it is the ‘fruit’ of the Spirit, not the ‘fruits’ of the Spirit. These qualities should come as a package-deal. We are not to display some of these qualities and not others.

gentleness

2. Why do you think people often view ‘gentleness’ as a negative thing?

A thinking question to start. Gentleness can often be viewed as ‘being soft’. People like to portray the image that they are ‘tough’ (particularly true for guys, but also for girls). It is seen as a sign of weakness.

3. Check out what the bible has to say about ‘gentleness’.

Why be gentle?	
Matthew 11:29	<i>We are to learn from Jesus and his model of how to be gentle. He instructs us to do this.</i>
When to be gentle?	
Philippians 4:5	<i>We should be gentle in everything we do, and it should be evident to those around us.</i>
How to be gentle?	
1 Thessalonians 2:6-9	<i>Paul as a model of gentleness – not placing unnecessary burden on others, so that he may be more effective in sharing the gospel with them.</i>
1 Peter 3:15-16	<i>We are to be gentle and respectful in the way in which we share the gospel with others.</i>

4. In light of the passages above, what are some areas in your life in which you need to be more gentle?

To get them to think about actually putting this into practice.

self-control

5. List the top three areas in your life in which you struggle with 'self-control'.

Get them to do this individually. You might like to share some of them for the sake of the group seeing that they probably struggle with the same things.

6. Check out what the bible has to say about 'self-control'.

Why show self-control?	
Proverbs 25:28	<i>This passage means that it is essential. Back then a city whose walls were broken down was unable to defend itself – it was wide open to attack.</i>
1 Thessalonians 5:5-9	<i>We belong to the 'light' and are not to be like who belong to the 'dark'. We have been chosen to receive salvation!</i>
How to show self-control?	
Titus 2:11-14	<i>Through the grace of God and the Holy Spirit we are enabled to live self-controlled lives.</i>

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

7. How accurately do you think these verses describe the world in which we currently live?

The purpose is to see that people around us (and even possibly ourselves) are described very accurately by these verses. You may need to briefly address the fact that we are already living in the 'last days'.

8. What should our response to these people be?

The passage says that we are to 'have nothing to do with them'. Get them to think through practically what this means. Do we completely ignore them? Do we share the gospel with them? Do we treat them with love and respect, but ensure we don't fall into their same ways?

9. How can we encourage one another to maintain self-control in the areas that we identified above?

Some practical application linked to question 5.

You may like to close with a quick recap of the nine qualities of the fruit of the Spirit that we have looked at over the past four weeks.