

Week of July 26, 2009

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### **Monday**

James 1:21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in *gentleness/meekness* receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

God's word is not to be argued with or reasoned away; it is to be received in meekness. *It will not always be pleasing nor easy to digest.* In fact, it will correct and challenge you, often asking you to do the opposite of what comes naturally to you. Love your enemies? Love your spouse? Discipline your children? Honor your leaders? But God's word is not given first of all to please you, but to save you.

### **Tuesday**

Matt. 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."

It is so easy to get life turned upside down. We think that all the good stuff comes to those who throw off the constraints and plow their own furrows in the direction of their choosing. Then when we find that we are messed up, crossed up, and thoroughly lost we question "how a good God could let such a mess happen." Jesus wants to direct your life with gentleness. His yoke is gentle, good, and gracious. Victorious rest is found in His yoke. Wise direction is found in His yoke. Marriage, career, relationships, church, and eternity find success in the gentle yoke.

### **Wednesday**

Eph. 5:15-18 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but *understand what the will of the Lord is*. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit

Sometimes we only play a game, a foolish game. We cry out, "I want to know what God's will is; what does God want me to do." Then we neglect the very clear instruction of God's word. Here it is! God's will is that you live a Spirit-filled life. Being filled by the Spirit means you are controlled by the Spirit. It means allowing Jesus to be the Lord of your life in every area: actions, thoughts, relations, time, words. The days are evil. Be wise. It's time to stop playing games of religion and become a devoted, obedient follower of Jesus.

### **Thursday**

Gal. 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness...

The gentleness of which the passage speaks can be understood as 'power under control.' It is not weakness or cowardice. In no way! Gentleness is a characteristic of Jesus! He is the Lord of the universe and the creator of all. *He is power.* Yet His power is always directed and under control. He could have called thousands of angels to war with us, but He didn't. Instead He gently interacted with us in grace, compassion, and kindness. He could have destroyed all life with one word spoken from His mouth. Instead He gave His life as a ransom for many. Now He calls you to bear as fruit His character of 'gentleness' before the world.

### **Friday**

Gal. 6:1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a *spirit of gentleness*; each one looking to yourself, *so that you too will not be tempted.*

The work of God's gentleness comes into sharp contrast with the world at the place of brotherly discipline. It does not negate discipline but informs it and aligns it. The believer who has tasted the deep grace of God deals gently with others, knowing that he too is capable of any transgression and remembering that many times God has graciously forgiven and restored him. This is not the absence of holding one another accountable, but the recognition that another's fall in no way elevates me but does offers me the possibility of restoring and elevating a brother.