

# FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

WHAT COMES OUT WHEN YOU GET SQUEEZED?



## Scripture References

Acts 6-7

Matthew 11:28-30

(Begin by singing the Fruit of the Spirit song. Make up new motions to go with fruits you haven't yet sung about!)

What is the fruit that comes from the Holy Spirit having control of our lives? (Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.) Which have we learned so far? (Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness.) And what do you remember about each one? Which comes next? Gentleness!

## Lesson Goals

Understand that gentleness is not weakness.  
Understand that one can be gentle and angry over evil at the same time.

To understand better what gentleness is, let's see what it **is not**! Gentleness is **not** irritation or anger. Gentleness never blames God for the bad things people do and it isn't weakness. It is the satisfaction you feel when you are angry at that evil, or those bad things. Gentleness is calmness inside of you, like peace. This calmness is especially toward God and how He deals with you. It is accepting whatever God allows to happen to you, knowing that it helps you know Him better.

## Memory Verse

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.  
Matthew 11:29 (NIV)

Our memory verse and the verses before and after it talk about gentleness. Jesus is our example of gentleness. Jesus, knowing that we get burdened down by the worries of this world, told us to take up His yoke and learn from Him. Do any of you know what a yoke is? A yoke is something that is used on a farm. It is a wooden bar that joins two animals, usually oxen, for working together. The animals are hitched in pairs to pull a load or plow a field. We are to walk with Jesus, the way two oxen who share a yoke work together. We should walk in step with him. We can do that because He is gentle and will give us rest.

We find a story in the book of Acts that helps explain what gentleness is. It is the story of a man who was "full of the Holy Spirit." His name was Stephen and he was chosen to help serve at church. Stephen served the church well, but evil men stirred the people up and caused problems. They couldn't stand up against his wisdom from God so they blamed Stephen for saying things he never said, for speaking against God. They arrested Stephen and dragged him off to appear before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Supreme Court. As they shouted against him and made up fake charges, they were amazed because Stephen's face looked like the face of an angel. He didn't appear irritated or angry.

Then, when asked if the accusations against him were true, Stephen recounted their Jewish history with God. He talked about God's promises to them. He reminded them of God's dealings with men like Abraham and Moses. Then he accused them of evil against those God sent to them to

## Application

How about you? How do you react when bad things happen to you? Do you blame God or do you run to Him?

Do you react the way Stephen did or in anger and irritation what others see? Are you full of the Holy Spirit the way Stephen was? You can be. The first step is to surrender to God and give your life to Him. Have you done that? If not, what are you waiting for? "Today is the day of salvation!" (2 Corinthians 6:2)

Once you are a believer, the second step is to continue to let God be in control of your life. Don't do things the way you always have, let God make the changes in you that are necessary to make you more like Him.

Do you trust God enough to be yoked with Him, to walk with Him, step by step? There will never be a load any lighter or a partner more gentle. Don't you want to learn from Him?

share the truth. He said, "You stubborn and hardheaded people! You are always fighting against the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors did. Is there one prophet that your ancestors didn't mistreat? They killed the prophets who told about the coming of the One who obeys God [Jesus]. And now you have turned against Him and killed Him." (Acts 7:51-52 CEV) Stephen was mad - and he had right to be. These men were falsely accusing him of evil things, when the truth was that they were the ones guilty of evil!

When the Sanhedrin heard this they were furious! "But [Stephen] was full of the Holy Spirit. He looked up to heaven and saw God's glory. He saw Jesus standing at God's right hand. 'Look!' he said. 'I see heaven open. The Son of Man is standing at God's right hand.'" (Acts 7:55-56 NIV) The Sanhedrin heard this and went crazy! They covered their ears, yelled, and dragged Stephen outside of the city. Then, they began to throw stones at Stephen. "While the members of the Sanhedrin were throwing stones at Stephen, he prayed. 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,' he said. Then he fell on his knees. He cried out, 'Lord! Don't hold this sin against them!' When he had said this, he died." (Acts 7:59-60 NIV)

Do you see the gentleness in Stephen's responses, even his accusation of the Sanhedrin? Do you see the gentleness in Stephen even as he died? How could Stephen respond that way, even as people who were full of hate stoned him to death? His story in the book of Acts tells us over and over again - Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit. Stephen chose to let the Holy Spirit control his life and the Holy Spirit produced the fruit of gentleness in him.



# Activities

- **Memory Verse Activity:** Make a paper chain with each word of the verse on a separate strip of paper. Don't forget to include the Scripture reference.
- **Sing:** "Step by Step," "Jesus, What a Wonder You Are," "As We Worship," "I Will," "Waves of Mercy," and "The Lord Has a Will."
- Do a little strength training. Talk about gentleness not being weakness, but a willingness to let God do whatever He knows is best for our lives.
- Run a "Three-Legged Race." Run one race with no instructions given. After the first race, talk about the need to work together and then run again. Discuss which race was easier. Talk about the memory verse.
- Talk about the process of refining silver. Compare it to the way God allows things into our lives that reveal sin, so that it can be removed, and make us more like Him.
- Work on your "Fruit of the Spirit Mobile." Add the picture of a yoke to your mobile. Set the mobiles aside until next week.
- **For Further Study:** (If you meet several days a week, use these lessons to reinforce what your students have already learned about Gentleness. Be sure to review the main lesson everyday, too.)
  - 1) David - 2 Samuel 11:1-12:23 (For older students)  
Focus on David's response to the consequences of his sin. Also read Psalm 51.
  - 2) Joseph - Matthew 1:18-2:23  
Focus on Joseph's acceptance of God's plan for his life, even though it was different from what he had probably expected.
  - 3) Jesus Cleanses the Temple - John 2:13-22  
Focus on Jesus' gentleness through His righteous anger at the buying and selling in the temple. Also focus on Jesus' consignment to God's plan - death on the cross. Also look at Jesus in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46).
  - 4) Job - Job 1:1-2:10  
Focus on Job's response to the difficulties in his life.

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and learn from Me,  
for I am

GENTLE

and humble in heart,  
and you will find  
rest for your souls.

Matthew 11:29

# Word Search



D I Q A T H E H S T R I S T T  
L F N A M D E D N U O W L P S  
G O A A Y I S D N S B U O P E  
V S E C N E D I F N O I W V R  
N I I E M M O R F N R A E L D  
E N R R K G E D V I D M O I N  
J S S E N O U F H T I G F T I  
N F M P A O Y E P C T E P S F  
R O A E G W O Y V A T N A D L  
D R H O O N E B M H A T A N L  
R G D N C E T H U E T L K E I  
K I O N T S E I T P K E S I W  
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and \_\_\_\_\_,  
for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
and \_\_\_\_\_ for your souls.  
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K I L Q U G E N T L E N  
O P N O T A N G R Y O D  
D E G O O L I S T E N D  
S K T H I N G S G O D E  
S T E P H E N R Y P H E  
L L B E L I E V E E S S  
E S P J S P S E R V E P  
J E F R I E N D S X P A  
J B E C O M E F O U N D  
S H O L Y S P I R I T A  
W A I T G H E A L E D S

GENTLE

NOT ANGRY

GOD

STEPHEN

SERVE

HOLY SPIRIT



# Word Search

D O V C F A R E H C E D  
K I L Q U G E N T L E N  
O P N O T A N G R Y O D  
D E G O O L I S T E N D  
S K T H I N G S G O D E  
S T E P H E N R Y P H E  
L L B E L I E V E E S S  
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