



SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS...MATTHEW 6:33

Fruit of the Spirit

Gentleness – Lesson 4

"Let your gentleness be evident to all." Philippians 4:5

Lesson Time

Supplies:

Mirror

Seeds

In the last few weeks we have seen how Jesus was gentle to other people. When they made wrong choices He was gentle to forgive them and teach them. We learned that He is a Good Shepherd and gently guides us back when we wander away from him. He can help us to be gentle, too. He will plant the seeds of His fruit in us when we follow him. (Hold out your hand with seeds in it.) This fruit takes a relationship (or friendship) with Him.

How do you become friends with someone and get to know him or her better? (Allow them time to think about answers.) You talk to them and spend time with them. God wants us to talk to Him and spend time with Him, too. We can talk to Him through prayer and listen to Him by reading the Bible. When we follow Him by loving and serving Him and others, He grows the fruit seeds in us. (Remind them how the seeds grew we planted a couple months ago when learning about patience.)

The Bible says, "Anyone who serves the Lord must not fight. Instead, he must be KIND to everyone. He must be able to teach. He must not hold anything against anyone. (PEACE) He must GENTLY teach those who oppose him. Maybe God will give a change of heart to those who are against you. That will lead them to know the truth. Maybe they will come to their senses. Maybe they will escape the devil's trap. He has taken them prisoner to do what he wanted." 2 Timothy 2:24-26.

When we are kind to people instead of fighting and arguing they see the gentleness and love of God. We reflect what He looks like just like a mirror reflects our images. (Use mirror and show how it reflects.) We need to forgive others like we talked about with the woman who was going to be stoned. We have all made wrong choices so we need to forgive and gently teach people how to live when they wander away from God. God forgives us and we need to tell others that He can forgive them, too.

We can pray and ask God to change our hearts and the hearts of people who don't love God. He can lead them to know the truth about Him and escape the devil's trap. Do you know what that means? Satan wants us to make bad choices and go against what God says. If God tells us to love each other and to be kind and gentle, Satan is trying to tell us to hate and be mean and harsh. God is only good and wants what is best for us and Satan is only bad and wants what is bad for us.

When we choose to turn to God, He opens our eyes so we can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. His Spirit makes us more and more like Him and we are changed into His glorious image. 2 Corinthians 3:18. The Holy Spirit then produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in our lives so other people see who God is because we are reflecting HIM. Gal. 5:22-23.

Jesus showed us how to be gentle like He was and forgive others so they can escape the devil's trap. As followers of Christ we are to show others the same gentleness Jesus has shown us. Our memory verse says "Let your gentleness be evident to all!" (Philippians 4:5) We can gently teach others how to escape Satan's trap that leads us to make wrong choices and to run to Jesus the Good Shepherd and Savior of the world. Can we be gentle on our own? Who do we need to help us?

Prayer Time

Activities

The goal of this time is to utilize a variety of engaging activities –passive and active play, crafts, application, and more – to reinforce what was taught in the lesson. While you may not get to every activity, we encourage you to complete the "Take-Home" activity so children leave with a tangible reminder of what was discussed today.

If numbers are high and/or time and space allow, you may want to use a center format: divide the class into groups (one for each activity) and rotate through the centers after an allotted time.



Gentle Loving Care (Group Activity)

Supplies:

Egg (1 per child)

Ziploc bags

Sharpie

Duct tape

Write each child's name on an uncooked egg. Then place the egg in its own bag and tape it shut so they don't open the bags. Explain that these eggs are fragile and must be handled gently. The children should carry their assigned egg with them during the other centers.

Let centers go on as usual. Don't remind anyone about his or her egg. At first the children will likely be very careful with their eggs, but they may eventually forget about their eggs and get careless. Even if the eggs do not crack, your children will find it difficult to be mindful of their eggs for the entire time. Explain that these fragile eggs are like other people. Sometimes we can say something that hurts someone's feelings. We can be harsh with our words and crush others. We can also get

frustrated and want to hit someone or be mean to them. Gentleness means treating each person with care, similar to how we needed to care for the eggs. Explain that when we don't pay attention to what God wants and how He wants us to treat others, we will find it hard to be gentle and treat others with care. We can ask God to help us be gentle and mindful of others.



Gentle Relay

Supplies:

2 baskets of cotton balls

1 basket with sign saying "God's truth,"

2 large spoons

They will line up in two lines with a basket of cotton balls in front of each line on the other side of the room. The "God's Truth" basket will be placed between the teams, at the starting line. Explain to the children that the cotton balls need to be saved from the devil's trap and they are the only ones who can help God gently lead them back to the truth. One child from each team will walk to the end, put a cotton ball on the spoon, and safely bring it back to the "God's Truth" basket at the start (they will share this basket). He or she will give the spoon to the next kid in line who will then do the same. The team that transports all of their cotton to God's truth basket first wins. However, encourage everyone to help get all the cotton balls back to the truth.



Reflection of Gentleness

Supplies:

Two paper towel tubes

Mirror

Flashlight

Set the paper towel tubes on a table in front of a mirror. Place them in a V-shape pointing toward the mirror. Use the flashlight to shine through one tube toward the mirror. Angle the second tube until you see the light reflected back through the second tube.

The point: When we treat others with gentleness (and love, patience, kindness...) like Jesus did, we reflect the image of God and His love to the people around us.



Craft Mirror

Supplies:

Cardstock oval cutouts

Foil squares or reflective paper

Tape

Glue sticks
Large craft sticks
Fruit stickers

Give each child an oval cutout and have them glue foil or reflective paper to it with the reflective side facing them. Then have the children put stickers around the outer edge of the oval. Then have them tape a craft stick onto the bottom of their circle so they have a handle for their mirror. Make sure they understand it's a mirror so they won't place stickers in the center of it.

The point: When we live our lives with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control other people see who God is because we are reflecting HIM.

*** When they are finished with this center talk to them about their eggs and see if they have remembered to treat them with gentleness.



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