

LESSON 8: THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS GENTLENESS.



Lesson scripture

Ephesians 4:2-3 (NIV)

"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."



Main emphasis

A Spirit-filled Christian is gentle.



Memory verse

Philippians 4:5 "Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near."

Proverbs 28:20 "A faithful man will be richly blessed." (*Teacher: please, explain to the students the meaning of this memory verse.*)



Objectives

The main goal of this lesson is to teach the students that they must be filled with the Holy Spirit so that they can be gentle to all people. At the end of the lesson, the students are expected to:

1. state that the eighth fruit of the Holy Spirit is gentleness;

2. give the meaning of gentleness;
3. explain why it is important to be gentle;
4. tell how they can apply this lesson to their lives;
5. recite the memory verse;
6. join the enrichment activity.



Materials to prepare

1. Visual aid for memory verse - Annex "A";
2. For lesson presentation - a doll, preferably a baby doll;
3. For the enrichment activity:
 - a) Paper plates;
 - b) Ribbons or pieces of garter;
 - c) Sequins;
 - d) White glue.



Presentation of the lesson

Today, our lesson is: the fruit of the Holy Spirit is gentleness. This is the eighth fruit of the Holy Spirit.

To be gentle means to be kind, peaceful and mild. Another word for it is "meek." This is not the same "weak." Rather, it is the opposite. The word "gentle" or

"meek" applies only to the strong, because only a strong person can be gentle; what makes him gentle is the fact that he decides not to use that strength.

An example for this is a father who carries a newborn baby. Our fathers are very, very strong physically. Yet, when we were very tiny babies, they were able to embrace us without hurting us because they decided not to use their physical strength. (Bring out baby doll and embrace it gently).

I would like to emphasize that what makes a person gentle is the fact that he decides not to use his strength although he has it. If he has no strength at all, we cannot say that such person is gentle or meek. Instead, he is weak. A weak person has no choice about using his strength.

Let us read our lesson scripture. Ephesians 4:2-3: "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."

According to this verse, gentleness is important because it is one characteristic that unites us as believers. In other words, it is important because it helps us have unity. How can we be gentle toward fellow believers? One way is through the use of gentle words.

According to Proverbs 15:1, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." Wrath means "intense anger" (matinding galit). To understand this lesson, I'd like to tell a story.

"Once there was a boy with a very bad temper.¹ Anytime someone spoke harshly to him, he answered back with mean, angry words, always turning the small problem into a big, terrible fight!

"One day the boy became a believer in Jesus Christ, and the Lord kindly washed away all his past, angry sins. The boy was so happy and grateful, but he was also very troubled about all the mean words he had said to so many people. *How can I take them back?* He wondered. His pastor made this suggestion:

'Make a list of all the people you can remember saying mean, angry words to. Ride your bike past their houses, and place a feather from an old pillow on their front porches (terrace / balcony). Go home and pray for every person, and then go back the next day and collect the feathers you left.' Do you think the boy was able to do as the pastor suggested? Why, or why not?

"When the boy returned to the pastor's office, he was brokenhearted. 'All the feathers were gone. I couldn't take them back', he said sadly.

"The boy understood the pastor's message about what happens to the words we say, but the kind pastor encouraged the boy to 'start right now and ask God to help you do what he tells us to do in Proverbs 15:1 - answer mean (bad) talk with kind words. It is hard, but nothing's too hard for the God who lives in you!'"

¹ This story is quoted from the book entitled "1001 ways to help your child walk with God" by Kathie Reimer, 1994, p. 52.



Life application

Ask the students to share how they could apply this lesson to their lives.



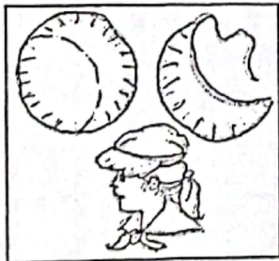
Evaluation

Let the students summarize what they have learned. For older students, they could write a short essay on it.



Enrichment activity

Let each student create a sun visor using the paper plate and garter or ribbon. See below.



Decorate the visor with sequins. While the students are doing the activity, explain that it is important for them to gently put the sequins on the visor so that they could make pretty designs. This is an exercise on gentleness. They must control the strength of their hands.



Offering

Ask one child to lead the prayer.



Closing

Close in prayer, thanking God for today's lesson, and asking for His help in applying it to our lives.



Your notes

ANNEX "A" - MEMORY VERSE

Philippians 4:5

"Let your
gentleness be
evident to all.
The Lord is
near. "