

GENTLENESS

1. The Definition of Gentleness.

- a. *πραῦς*: “pert. to not being overly impressed by a sense of one’s self-importance, *gentle, humble, considerate, meek* in the older favorable sense” (BDAG, 861).
- b. *πραῦτης*: “the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one’s self-importance, *gentleness, humility, courtesy, considerateness, meekness* in the older favorable sense” (BDAG, 861).
- c. *ἐπιείκεια*: “the quality of making allowances despite facts that might suggest reason for a different reaction, *clemency, gentleness, graciousness, courtesy, indulgence, tolerance*” (BDAG, 371).
- d. *ἐπιεικής*: “not insisting on every right of letter of law or custom, *yielding, gentle, kind, courteous, tolerant*” (BDAG, 371).

2. The Opposite of Gentleness.

- a. Unkindness, brutality.
- b. **1 Co 4:21** 21 What do you desire? Shall I [Paul] come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of *gentleness* (*πραῦτης*)?
- c. **1 Ti 3:2-3** 2 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not a drunkard, not violent but *yielding* (*ἐπιεικής*), not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

3. The Source/Example of Gentleness.

- a. **Mt 11:29** 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me [Jesus], for I am *gentle* (*πραῦς*) and humble (*ταπεινός*) in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
- b. **Mt 21:5** 5 Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you, *gentle* (*πραῦς*), and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.
(1) Nietzsche hated Christianity because it prized gentleness.
- c. **Jas 3:17** 17 But the wisdom *from above* is first pure, then peaceable, *yielding/gentle* (*ἐπιεικής*), open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.

4. The Expectation of Gentleness.

- a. **Eph 4:1-3** 1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility (*ταπεινοφροσύνη*) and *gentleness* (*πραῦτης*), with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- b. **Php 4:5** 5 Let your *gentleness* (*ἐπιεικής*) be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand.
- c. **Tt 3:1-2** 1 Remind [believers] to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarrelling, to be *yielding* (*ἐπιεικής*), and to show every *gentleness* (*πᾶσαν... πραῦτητα*) toward all people.

5. The Power of Gentleness.

- a. **2 Co 10:1** 1 I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the *gentleness* (*πραῦτης*) and clemency (*ἐπιείκεια*) of Messiah—I who am humble (*ταπεινός*) when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away!....

- b. **Ga 5:22-23** 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness (πραΰτης), self-control. Against such things there is no law.
- c. **Col 3:12-13** 12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, gentleness (πραΰτης), and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other.

6. The Practicalities of Gentleness.

- a. People who are gentle refrain from using their strength for intimidation or manipulation.
- b. A gentle person is one by whom others don't feel threatened when they're vulnerable.
- c. When exercising discipline or correcting opponents, gentleness is required. We are to handle people problems with gentleness.
 - (1) **1 Co 4:21** 21 What do you desire? Shall I [Paul] come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness (πραΰτης)?
 - (2) **2 Co 10:1** 1 I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the gentleness (πραΰτης) and clemency (ἐπιείκεια) of Messiah—I who am humble (ταπεινός) when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away!....
 - (3) **Ga 6:1** 1 Brothers and sisters, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness (πραΰτης). Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.
 - (4) **2 Ti 2:24-25** 24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness (πραΰτης). God may perhaps grant them a change of mind leading to a knowledge of the truth....
- d. **Jas 1:21** 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with gentleness (πραΰτης) the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.
 - (1) We are to exhibit an attitude of gentleness when we read or study Scripture.
- e. **1 Pe 2:18** 18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle (ἐπιεικής) but also to the unjust.
- f. **1 Pe 3:3-6** 3 Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewellery, or the clothing you wear— 4 but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle (πραΰς) and quiet (ἡσύχιος) spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. 5 For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.
- g. **1 Pe 3:15-16** 15 But in your hearts honour Messiah the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness (πραΰτης) and respect (φόβος), 16 having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Messiah may be put to shame.
- h. We are to be gentle in all our interactions with others, including our superiors, our peers, and our subordinates, and including believers and unbelievers.

7. The Result/Reward of Gentleness.

- a. **Mt 5:5** 5 Blessed are the gentle (πραΰς), for they shall inherit the earth.

- b. **Eph 4:1-3** 1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη) and gentleness (πραΰτης), with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- c. Gentleness is one of the qualities that qualifies us for church leadership.
 - (1) **1 Ti 3:2-3** 2 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not a drunkard, not violent but yielding (ἐπιεικής), not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.
 - (2) **2 Ti 2:24-25** 24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness (πραΰτης). God may perhaps grant them a change of mind leading to a knowledge of the truth....
- d. **Jas 3:13** 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the gentleness (πραΰτης) of wisdom.