



A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: Matthew 11:20-30

Message for the Week: The Power of Gentleness

Sunday, November 17

Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

Who is the gentlest person you know? What makes them gentle?

Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [Matthew 11:20-30](#) out loud.

(Clicking the link will bring you to multiple translations.)

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

Respond / Reflect:

What is gentleness? What is the opposite of gentleness?

Are gentleness and weakness the same? Why or why not?

Why is Jesus' burden/yoke gentle and easy and light? How can a burden be light?

What is Jesus' invitation when it comes to following him?

What does gentleness look like in real life? At home? At work? At school? While hanging out with friends or scrolling on social media?

How does gentleness bring healing?

Take Away:

What is a main point or key message that you learned, understood, observed, or experienced that you are taking away with you from your group's reflections on the bible passage or your group's conversations today?

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Who in your group needs prayer today? Who in your group will you pray for?

Pray this prayer together:

Father, help us to see others as you do, people in need of being loved. You have told us how to do it, may we do it with gentleness, showing Jesus to everyone we meet. May our gentleness bring healing to wounded and weary souls. AMEN

"Try It" - Putting our Faith into Action:

Who do you need to be gentle with this week? How are you going to be gentle with yourself this week? What needs to happen for you to do both of these things?

Galatians 5:22-26 – New International Version

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

Matthew 11:20-30 - New International Version

Woe on Unrepentant Towns

²⁰ Then Jesus began to denounce the towns in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. ²¹ "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. ²³ And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted to the heavens? No, you will go down to Hades.^[a] For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. ²⁴ But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."

The Father Revealed in the Son

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

²⁷ "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 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. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Footnotes

- a. [Matthew 11:23](#) That is, the realm of the dead

Matthew 11:20-30 - The Message

The Unforced Rhythms of Grace

²⁰ Next Jesus unleashed on the cities where he had worked the hardest but whose people had responded the least, shrugging their shoulders and going their own way.

²¹⁻²⁴ "Doom to you, Chorazin! Doom, Bethsaida! If Tyre and Sidon had seen half of the powerful miracles you have seen, they would have been on their knees in a minute. At Judgment Day they'll get off easy compared to you. And Capernaum! With all your peacock strutting, you are going to end up in the abyss. If the people of Sodom had had your chances, the city would still be around. At Judgment Day they'll get off easy compared to you."

²⁵⁻²⁶ Abruptly Jesus broke into prayer: "Thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. You've concealed your ways from sophisticates and know-it-alls, but spelled them out clearly to ordinary people. Yes, Father, that's the way you like to work."

²⁷ Jesus resumed talking to the people, but now tenderly. "The Father has given me all these things to do and say. This is a unique Father-Son operation, coming out of Father and Son intimacies and knowledge. No one knows the Son the way the Father does, nor the Father the way the Son does. But I'm not keeping it to myself; I'm ready to go over it line by line with anyone willing to listen.

²⁸⁻³⁰ "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."