
Sermon Text Discussion Notes 08/16/2020

2 Timothy 2:20-26 – “Gentleness” by Drew Hunter

Overview

The fruit of the Spirit are the virtues God’s Spirit cultivates in his people. When we become Christians, we don’t just receive forgiveness, we receive a new power – the power of God’s Spirit to transform our character to become more like Christ.

One of the rarest, most difficult fruits to bear in our lives is the fruit of gentleness. Why? The kinds of things that come naturally out of us – the works of the flesh – are anything but gentle. Furthermore, gentleness is often misunderstood. Some think it’s a sign of weakness, not strength. Or we think it’s incompatible with masculinity or leadership. But it’s actually a key ingredient in true joy. And it is exactly what our relationships and culture need right now.

1. Who needs gentleness? (v. 20-21)
2. What does gentleness look like? (v. 22-25a)
3. How do we get gentleness? (v. 25b-26)

Quotations

“Controversies and quarrels are stirring in many parts of our society. People are divided about the upcoming election. They are divided about how to move forward with racial concerns. They are divided about how to respond to COVID-19—as governments, as states, as schools, as churches, as individuals... So what do we need in the midst of this? God’s word to us here is clear: if you want to be useful to God in serving others... you need to learn to engage in controversy with gentleness and kindness.” – Drew Hunter

“What is gentleness? It’s is a disposition, a posture, a tone toward others that is kind, rather than harsh or forceful or belittling. Gentleness is about responding to conflict without being harsh or aggressive. The opposite of gentleness is being trigger-happy. It is mean-spirited, one-directional diatribes. It is expressing angry exasperation. And it can be as subtle as a prideful, boastful attitude toward others in conversation.” – Drew Hunter

Understanding & Application

- 1) Read 2 Tim. 2:14-21. Remember that an essential part of being useful to God (v.21) relates to our ability to engage with controversy with gentleness. Given the status quo of our society (see Drew’s quote above), how do you think an infusion of gentleness might change our tendencies towards division?
- 2) Read 2 Tim. 2:22-25. Notice that Paul calls Timothy to lead with courage as he deals with controversies. What might it look like to practically communicate truth boldly and gently?
- 3) Read 2 Tim. 2:25-26. We’ve been given four motivators to be gentle: by believing what is true about God, about others, about ourselves, and about how Jesus treats us. Take some time to reflect on those four different motivators. How do each of them motivate us and empower us to be gentle with others?
- 4) Take some time as a group to confess specific areas of your life and/or moments where you have failed to be gentle. Consider apologizing to someone in the group if needed. Or, perhaps resolve to restore a relationship that was damaged by a lack of gentleness. Then, take time to encourage one another: sharing specific instances/examples where you’ve seen each other grow in practicing gentleness.