**BETTER TOGETHER** in 2022

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**Overflow**

**Overflowing with Gentleness**



We live and breathe in a world that tells us to have things our way. It is an impatient, anxious society that often puts self above others, and it plays right into our sinful nature. We want to have things our way, to get what we want, and when others do not act or respond the way we think they should, we can respond find ourselves responding with harshness.

Have you ever **“bitten someone’s head off?”**

**Idiom** – an artistic expression characteristic of a person

Merriam Webster defines the expression this way: *to yell at someone or to be very critical of someone especially very suddenly.*

There is a **gentle** invitation to a **better** way.

In the four gospel accounts given to us: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – eighty-nine chapters of biblical text—there is a marvelous place where Jesus tells us about his own heart.

*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* ***Take my yoke upon you****, and* ***learn from me****, for* ***I am gentle*** *and* ***lowly in heart****, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”* **Matthew 11:28-30**

Jesus describes His heart as **gentle** and **lowly**. These characteristics are animating features of who He is and how He approaches people.

***Gentleness*** – quality of being mild-mannered, compassionate, kind, tender, equitable, and fair

1. Gentleness is not **weakness**.

***Prautes*** - representative of a wild stallion whose strength has been brought under control for the master’s use.

1. Gentleness is strength under **control**.

“Nothing is as strong as gentleness.” – **St Francis de Sales**

Jesus’ posture is not one of harshness, but rather gentleness. It is not one of a **pointed** **finger**, but rather one of **open arms.**

1. For some of us, being gentle can be **hard**.

Jesus invites us to a life of **gentleness**.

***Take my yoke upon you****, and* ***learn from me****, for* ***I am gentle*** *and* ***lowly in heart****, and you will find rest for your souls.* **Matthew 11:29**

**Yoke** - a means of governing power and linking two or more for greater strength

***Let your gentleness be evident to all****. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.* **Philippians 4:5-7**

**Some benefits of gentleness:**

Gentleness is a **calming** presence, reminding others that God is in **control**.

Gentleness defuses **conflict**.

*A* ***gentle answer*** *turns away wrath, but a* ***harsh word*** *stirs up anger.* **Proverbs 15:1**

**Mirror neurons** – sympathize and mirror back what others feel

When other people raise their voice, gentleness leads you to lower yours.

*If the boss is angry with you, don’t quit! A quiet,* ***gentle spirit*** *can overcome even great mistakes.*

**Ecclesiastes 10:4 NLT**

Gentleness is powerfully **persuasive**.

*Patient persistence pierces through indifference;* ***gentle speech*** *breaks down* ***rigid defenses****.*

**Proverbs 25:15** Msg

Gentleness communicates **love**.

The quickest way to build a relationship is to be gentle.

*Husbands, love your wives, and* ***do not be harsh*** *with them.*

***Colossians 3:19***

*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but* ***bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord****.*

**Ephesians 6:4**

Gentleness is **attractive.**

*…but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the* ***imperishable beauty*** *of a* ***gentle and quiet spirit****, which in God's sight is very precious.*

**1 Peter 3:4**

Gentleness gains **respect**.

*But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable,* ***gentle****, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.* **James 3:17**

Gentleness **witnesses** to those far from God.

*For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.*

**2 Corinthians 2:15**

You don’t win your **enemies** to Christ … you win your **friends**.

*Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling,* ***to be gentle****, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.* **Titus 3:1-7**

Gentleness is **grease** to the gears of **community**.

*Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility,* ***gentleness****, and patience.*

**Colossians 3:12** NLT

Choose to be **gentle**. If we raise our voice, may it be only for praise. If we clench our fist, may it only be in prayer. If we make a demand, may it be only of ourselves.